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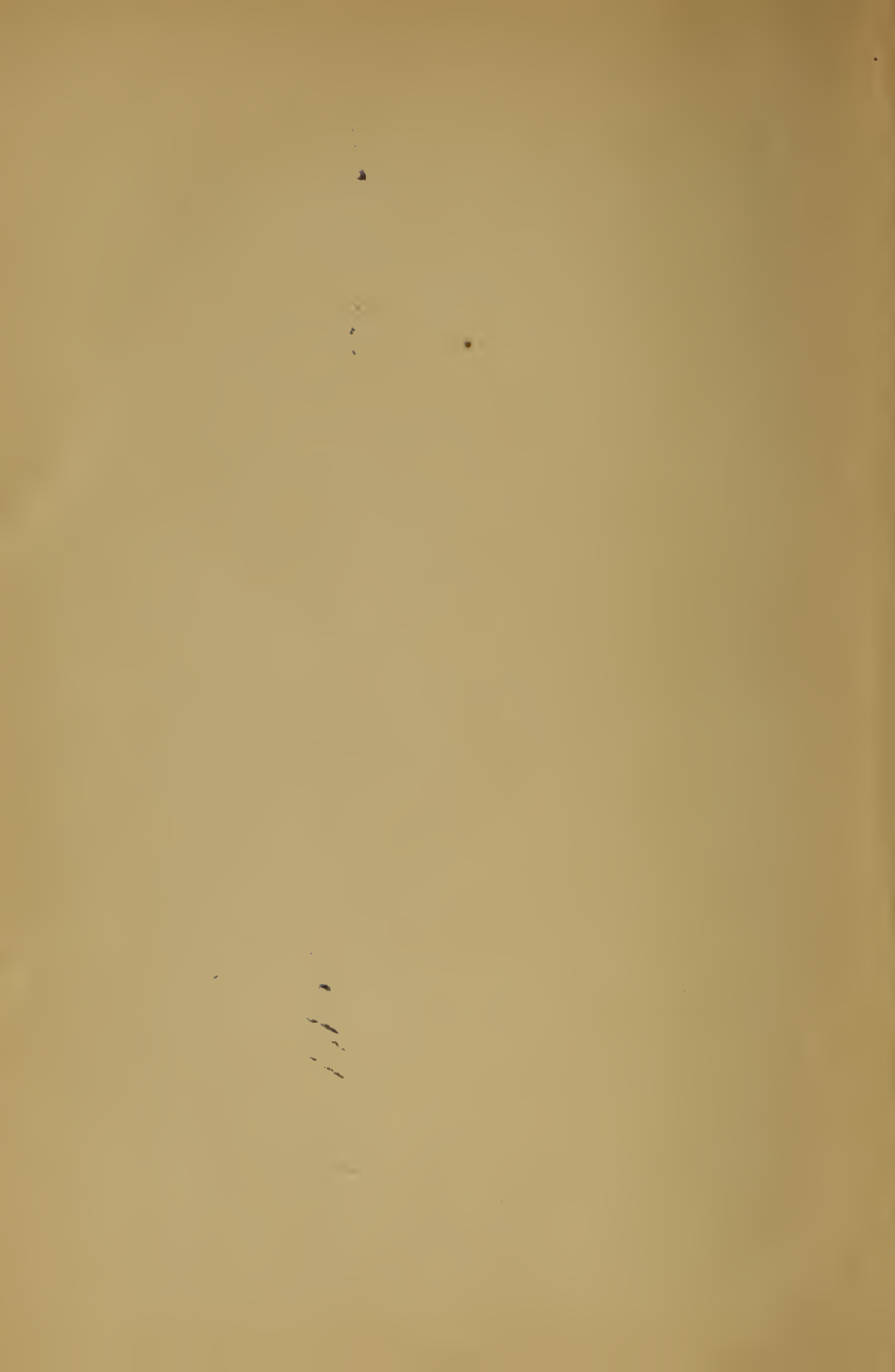
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# THE LIFE AND TEACHINGS OF JESUS

A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE SOURCES  
OF THE GOSPELS, TOGETHER WITH A  
STUDY OF THE SAYINGS OF JESUS

BY

ARTHUR KENYON ROGERS

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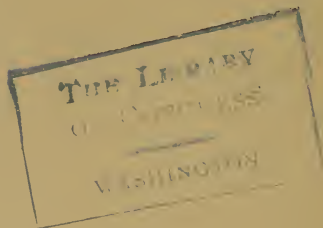
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TO  
MY FATHER AND MOTHER





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# THE LIFE AND TEACHINGS OF JESUS.

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## INTRODUCTION.

THE discussions about religion which we have been familiar with in recent years have had one thing about them which, if it is not new, is at any rate sufficiently striking to deserve that a particular emphasis should be put upon it, and that is the way in which the discussion has been taken out of the hands of a small circle of professed champions, and has become a topic of public interest, familiar even to readers of magazines and newspapers. This perhaps has not been without its disadvantages, for the controversies have not always been marked by soberness or by very great wisdom; and yet one hardly can regret a fact which shows what a hold religion has over the minds of men, and in how real a manner they are concerned about it. But whatever we may think about the fact, it has shown in a very unmistakable way, what religious teachers are still sometimes disposed to ignore, that there are a very great number of persons who are no longer content to take their religious creeds upon

authority, but who are demanding a reason for what they have been taught, and who want a faith which shall harmonize with what in other ways they are beginning to learn about the universe.

And also, to one who is willing to recognize the facts, popular Christianity, the forms of Christianity which our churches and our religious newspapers predominatingly represent, has so far failed to satisfy this demand, and it does not seem likely that it will be able to satisfy it. The Church has insisted upon it that it had a religion which was perfect, a religion where no changes could be allowed ; and it therefore cannot be surprised if other things have been changing and have left it behind. For that it has been left behind, that no longer it is in sympathy with what is most characteristic in modern ways of thinking, is the plainest of facts, whether or not we may regret that this is so. The break between science and religion we long ago were told of, aggressively enough on both sides ; and every day it seems to be growing harder for men to read and think, and still to hold to beliefs which a hundred years ago men found little difficulty in holding to. Popular religion, it is true, in its more outspoken representatives, has its own explanation for this, an explanation not flattering to science and culture ; but explainable or not, for all eyes the fact is there, and it is not well for any one to pass too lightly by it. For while truth of course may be doubted, and for all that may be none the less true, yet we must not forget that the proper business of truth is to approve itself to us, to satisfy us ; and whatever steadily and inevitably gives rise to doubt, to doubt which is the greater as knowledge becomes greater, and which often men cannot get rid of unless they refuse to think

at all, we may hesitate fairly to receive as truth. Christianity has claimed it as a chief excellence, that through its means religion is no longer esoteric, the possession of philosophers, but is brought home to all men, that one who does not have the training of the schools still may enjoy the benefits which it confers; and it has done quite right to insist upon this. But when religion becomes, not something where the wise man and the ignorant stand upon terms which are fairly equal, but where the wise man is at a disadvantage, something which is less easily to be accepted by the thinker than by the one who cannot or who will not think at all, then the mistake is just as fatal as the old mistake of making salvation depend upon philosophy, and such a religion cannot long continue.

To religion itself, fortunately, there seems to be but little danger. Religion, of some sort or other, there appears no likelihood that men will be content to do without, if it be nothing more than M. Renan's playing at religion. But whether this is likely to be the Christian religion, the religion of the Bible, there is more reason perhaps to be in doubt. Certainly, those who tell us that the Christian religion must now be set aside are fairly numerous, and they are not lacking at all in positiveness; if they only might agree better as to what is to take its place, we should listen to them, perhaps, more hopefully. For myself, I confess I do not believe that the religion of the Bible is yet to be put aside; rather does it seem to me that more and more men are likely to come back to it, and to rest upon it. For, for one thing, however skilfully our new religions have been framed and adapted to meet the needs of a universal religion, a religion of mankind, mankind in general has steadily refused to see their superiority, and has

found them exceedingly comfortless and unsatisfying. This the author of the religion no doubt finds explicable enough. To know truth, he will say, requires a certain amount of preparation, of culture, and most of all it requires a clear vision and a freedom from prejudice; and these qualifications the mass of men do not possess, notoriously they are under the control of priest-craft and of superstition. But after all the matter is not to be so easily explained. That Christianity for some eighteen hundred years now has had the power to arouse a boundless love in multitudes of men, shows very plainly that a real truth, and a very essential truth, does indeed lie wrapped up in it. Superstition, mistaken enthusiasm, does not act in this way, it does not hold men as Christianity holds them, it does not work upon them as Christianity has done to make them in a surprising way purer and better men, a test which is, after all, not the worst one that could be applied. That the Christian religion, too, has succeeded best in bringing joy to men, in bringing them peace and satisfaction, this also is not to be lightly thought of. Now just in this lies the one evidence for the Christian religion which cannot be shaken, the evidence that rests upon experience. That men have been made better, and the needs which they feel to be their deepest needs have been satisfied, that somehow or other this has come to them through the Bible, however we may explain this we cannot explain it away. But upon this fact men have not been content to rest; they have made the explanation of it more important than the fact itself, and they have even made the fact depend upon the explanation. The Christian, on his side, has his creed, his elaborate theory of the Bible, and upon the certainty of this theory he hotly maintains that the cer-

tainty of his experience must depend. The unbeliever is quite ready to meet him half way, and he demonstrates eagerly that the theory is all wrong, and so the experience ought not to exist at all. But then the experience does exist, it stands as a fact ; and to show that any number of explanations may be questionable explanations does not change the fact in the slightest.

This then is the important thing about the Bible, the benefit which actually it may be the means of bringing to us. To criticise the Bible, to find out when and how it was written, and what is the truth about the matters of history which it deals with, however important this may be, is still a matter of secondary importance ; and when criticism stops at this, and thinks that by explaining this it has explained everything, it is of very little importance indeed. So far as religion is concerned, one might even prefer to have nothing to do with criticism at all, to let questions of date and authorship look after themselves ; but to many people this is no longer possible, and that it is no longer possible the Church has itself largely to blame. The Church has not been content to insist upon the many things in the Bible which are undeniably true and beautiful, but it must needs surround the Bible with a rigid theory about it, it must warn people to accept the whole Bible without demur, as the Church accepted it, or else to let the Bible quite alone. To show that these theories cannot be true, to show that this or that belief about the Bible can no longer be accepted, is not the highest work or the most important, but this is the first thing that has to be done. Such work is destructive, and one could wish it did not need doing at all ; done at its best it dissatisfies us somewhat. Such a work was that of



Strauss in his famous *Life of Jesus*, a book almost to be regretted, in spite of all its great merits. But, nevertheless, it is one of the objects of this work to show that, after all that an unsparing criticism can say, the religious value of the Bible still remains, and that it speaks to the present generation with a power which, under the old conceptions, it could never hope to have.

As for the results in Bible criticism which so far have been established by scholars, especially by the German scholars, I am not disposed to make too sweeping claims. But one thing at any rate criticism has established, for which, with all its failures, we should be very grateful to it, and that is the claim of the writings which make up the Bible to be treated as literature, as historical documents. Very much of our English and American criticism has failed to have any influence, and must of necessity fail, because it is not willing to recognize this fact ; it is a criticism which is still busying itself about theories of verbal inspiration, and which still hopes that it may be able to remove all inconsistencies from the Bible. No one who understands the spirit of these endeavors will have any desire to ridicule them ; but we must insist that they are hopeless, and, besides being hopeless, that they are doing a great deal to destroy the credit of the Bible itself. Such conceptions as these it will not be possible for me to argue against in detail ; to this end Mr. Ingersoll has been raised up, and Mr. Ingersoll we may safely leave with those who are interested in his writings, to settle matters among themselves. Nor is argument, however clear and logical it may be, likely to have very much influence in convincing any one, for of argument there never has been any lack. So long as men look at the Bible as a book direct from heaven, no

evidence that can be brought forward on the other side will ever be strong enough to outweigh its testimony. But we are coming to see that it is not possible to look upon the Bible as a book direct from heaven, we are finding out that the Bible is only one sacred book among many, and that it is not the Christian only who has his doctrine of infallibility. And if those to whom the narratives of the Bible are so sacred that they are not to be handled freely as other narratives are handled, could for just one moment stand aside from their own point of view, and could realize that criticism, if it is honest criticism, must begin by looking upon the Bible just as they themselves look upon other sacred books, as something to be tested just as other books are tested, at least some of the bitterness of controversy would be done away.

There is the more need to speak plainly and sharply in this matter, because many of our religious leaders are disposed to admit the principle, while they are not willing to apply it. The Bible, they say, may contain errors. But that any particular statement is an error, they will not admit so long as there is any way, probable or improbable, in which it may be explained. Now this is not consistent, and it is not quite honest ; it is pretending to treat the Bible in an impartial way, without treating it in a way that is actually impartial. When we are dealing with any other book we do not assume that its statements are true so long as there is any conceivable way in which they might be true ; we balance the evidence, and then we decide for the more probable view. And we must insist that the statements of the Bible are to be accepted or rejected on just the same degree of probability or improbability which would govern us anywhere else.

We have had no lack of discussion in recent years as to just what inspiration is, and how much ground it covers. Such discussions, one cannot help thinking, are to no very great profit. One who holds that the Bible is wholly without error is at the least consistent ; but if we admit but one error, however slight that error may be, we really have no right to stop half way. For if error is possible, then any particular statement may be in error, and there is nothing left for it but to test each statement upon its own merits. No more have we the right, while we hand over the history to criticism, to retain our claim of infallibility for the religious teaching. For, apart from the fact that we very often cannot separate the two, it is just in the religious teaching that we meet with some of the greatest difficulties. Let us take such a story as that which is given in the twenty-first chapter of Second Samuel : Jehovah sends a famine upon the land because, some years before, Saul had slain the Gibeonites ; the seven sons of Saul are put to death, and Jehovah is appeased. Let us apply our test to it ; what should we have said if we had met with this story in any other book ? Without hesitation we should have said that it was barbarous and superstitious, a wholly unworthy notion of God. Then with no less hesitation let us say the same thing when it is in the Bible that we find it. So, too, in the New Testament we find the whole Church believing in a second coming of Christ, which should take place within a few years. This is a belief which is distinctly a religious belief, and yet for all that it was a mistaken belief, and we have to admit that it was mistaken.

If then we will make up our minds that God has not seen fit to give men a book which will save them the



trouble of doing their religious thinking for themselves, we shall find that we have left a theory of inspiration, which may not settle all our questions in so short and easy a fashion, but which at least has the advantage that it is something which can be verified. None of us, if we had lived in the days of Isaiah or of Paul, would, it is likely, have been willing to submit to Isaiah or to Paul, as to infallible guides, who could make no mistake in their teaching, any more than, in our own day, we should have been willing to submit to Mr. Arnold or Mr. Spurgeon. And the mere use of pen and ink surely gives no stamp of infallibility to any man's beliefs. But any one of us might have been glad to recognize in Isaiah or in Paul a man to whom had been granted a new insight into religious truth, truth which we accepted, not because it came from Isaiah or from Paul, but because it bore in itself the testimony to its own truthfulness. And in the Bible this is just what we have, we have the words, coming to us directly or through other men, of those who have been the world's greatest religious teachers; only here we do not have them by word of mouth, but in the form of literature, of many different books. These books were called forth just as sermons and essays and histories are called forth now. In the same way they represent the convictions of the authors. But for just the reason that we do not believe there have lived in the world some thirty-five or forty men whose opinions on history and science and religion have been infallibly true, for just this reason we do not believe the books they have written are infallibly true. Just what is true and what is not true we have to determine exactly as we should determine it in the books of Mr. Arnold and Mr. Spurgeon. The statements of history and of

science we have to judge by the rules which govern historical and scientific criticism ; the religious truths we must judge by their own inherent reasonableness.

And coming to the Bible in this way, treating it as we should treat any other book, it will not escape us that it is just in the matter of the miraculous that the case for the Bible is the weakest. For in other books it is precisely this supernatural element which we treat with the least hesitation ; when we meet with miracles we do not ask any one to prove to us that they are not true, we simply assume that they are not true. We may ask what foundation lies at the bottom of them, but even when there is no such foundation that we can come at, we are none the less sure that it is only with natural events that we have to do.

Now that this method men should hesitate to apply rigorously when they come to the Bible miracles, to the Gospel miracles most of all, one may not find very surprising. For the Gospel miracles there are many things to be said which one cannot say for other miracles, and upon the Gospel miracles, too, vastly more depends. But still men have been far too eager to establish their importance, and they have made much to depend upon them which really does not depend upon them at all. For the divine character of the Christian religion may stand, quite apart from the question of any miracles that are connected with it, and one may quite consistently hold to the one while he lets the other go. A miracle, we may say, defined in simple terms, is something which the working of natural and every day laws could not bring about, which is not the result of an orderly extension and development of forces with which we are acquainted, but an interruption of this development, whose value

lies just in the fact that it is not permanent, not something that we are used to,—putting aside philosophical refinements, this is what naturally we mean. Now so soon as one recognizes what a miracle is, he will see that to deny miracles is not at all to deny the presence of God, to deny the supernatural. Indeed one might fairly say to the arguer for miracles, When you insist upon the miraculous, you are neglecting the very thing which points most clearly to the supernatural. It is just in the fact of law, of orderly development, of the absence of what is simply disconnected and arbitrary, that men to-day are inclined to see the presence of God most clearly. The indications of a goal to which the universe is tending, and which was wrapped up in its very beginnings, the slow and steady progress from the simple to the complex along definite lines, the evidence of a purpose in the long stretch of material evolution and human history, this is where men now are looking to see God's hand at work. And it is because the Christian religion does not interrupt this development, but falls in naturally with it, because we see a religion slowly unfolding till it should be fit to become a world religion, because we see righteousness working itself out in an extraordinary nation and an extraordinary life, and then extending itself to raise the rest of the world to the same level, that we call that religion and that life divine. But you do not think that such proof is enough ; in law, it is true, you do find a revelation of God, and you insist upon it, but in his highest revelation you think that he has given up this proof and has gone over to the other side, that he revealed himself in law, and then he revealed himself by breaking his law. And when you blame us, one might still go on to say, because in denying mir-

acles we show a lack of faith in God, we might reply that this may be a matter of opinion. For to see a revelation of God in the Christian religion because it is reasonable, because it is worthy of God and in harmony with the other revelations that he has made, this also, we think, is faith after a sort, and perhaps as acceptable as a faith in miracles. For a miracle after all proves very little indeed, and strictly it has nothing to do at all with what is the real object of faith. A miracle only shows that the one who performs it has a certain power over physical things, and it does not prove in the least that his words are true, though naturally enough we are more ready to accept them as true. We might conceive certainly that God could not warrant his truth to us except by giving us a sample of what he can do, by showing us how powerful he is; but it would be quite as worthy of God, we think, if the truth had in it the power to attest itself. Indeed the greatest weakness of your argument appears in what you yourselves admit. You will not treat fairly, you say to us, the evidence for miracles; you assume to begin with that they are not true, you let your natural objection to them influence your judgment. To you this seems to be a serious fault, perhaps a moral fault, but to us what you say appears to overthrow your own position. That there is a natural objection to miracles which makes them not easily to be believed, that every day it is growing harder and harder to believe them, and that they cannot be received except on the firmest and surest evidence, you yourselves will be ready to admit. But miracles are only valuable for the proof they furnish; in themselves they have for the most part no value at all. So that you are insisting that the Christian religion is to be proved by the very things

which themselves are most in need of proof ; you tell us that the proof of God rests upon the miraculous, and then you blame us because we have not faith enough in God to believe the miracles. It does not seem to us that for God to place men in a world where, after they came to know it, a distrust of miracles would become inevitable, and then to base the proof of his revelation to them upon this very thing, would be either fair or likely ; and the fact that we find it natural to suspect the miraculous, shows, we think, that miracles do not happen.

For most people, doubtless, there will still be reasons which will keep them wholly from giving the miracles up, and most of all they will fear that they are detracting from the greatness of Jesus himself. The fear is a natural one, and it is not lightly to be disregarded ; but seriously we may ask ourselves whether the honor we have paid to Jesus has not been of a very doubtful sort after all, whether it has not been more a seeming honor than a real one. In our theologies, no doubt, and in our creeds, we have made much of him, but it has been the glory of a doctrine rather than the glory of a person, and of the real Jesus we have had far too little. And to the real Jesus we now must come, for the world no longer can content itself with a mock-man ; full and true humanity it must have first of all. How are men who must walk by faith to be helped by one who walked by sight, men who must fight their way through doubts and perplexities, by one who remembers a former life in heaven, who is omniscient and all-powerful ? Such a view as this does not honor Jesus, but by making easy and necessary for him what for other men is hard, it makes it impossible that he should attain that which is a man's highest achieve-



ment, it takes away from him the blessedness of those who have not seen and yet have believed. The truth is, that if Jesus is to hold his old position, he must needs be rid first of the incubus of the sensuous and magical conceptions of religion with which he has been weighted. For these beliefs the foundations are rapidly crumbling away, and not even the authority of Jesus can hold them up much longer. Now, no one who has once submitted to the charm of Jesus' influence and has felt the immense power of his personality, can for a moment doubt that his position will be vindicated in the end ; nevertheless it is not so easy to give the proofs for one's faith, and to show just how the growth of legend which has gathered about the real Jesus and obscured his features is to be stripped away. It is this that I have made the attempt to do. I have not tried at all to treat questions of scholarship, except those necessary for my purpose, in an exhaustive way, nor to give a picture of the times in which Jesus lived. This already has been done much better than I could do it. Nor have I had any special desire to make a vivid narrative out of hazardous conjectures. What I have had in mind particularly to do was to bring the results of a careful criticism of the Gospels to bear upon the words attributed to Jesus, and to bring together into a consistent picture whatever the test may have left untouched. The beauty and the grandeur of this picture as it exists in my own mind I fear I have not been able to reproduce, but at least I trust I have removed some of the hindrances to each man's seeing that beauty for himself.

I know that there are many to whom this book, if they ever happen to read it, will seem to be only an attack on what they hold as sacred. I shall be sorry

if this is so, but I do not see how it can well be helped. I have tried to let the facts make their own impression upon me, and I can do no better than to tell frankly what that impression is. And in the end I feel sure this will prove the truest method. Enough compromise in religious matters we have had already. If the scalpel does not go deep enough, the pain has been of no avail and the operation might as well never have been performed. I cannot feel surprised, however, that men should want to keep their own beliefs, and should not like to see them treated too roughly ; and I believe that the spirit which prompts this deserves all consideration. Our liberal writers of late years have made us tolerably familiar with the idea, no doubt startling enough in its time, that belief, after all, is not of very much account in religion, and that we may be satisfied if we can acquit ourselves fairly in the matter of conduct. Why, they are accustomed to say, should we trouble ourselves about creeds and articles of faith ? Let us stop preaching doctrines, and let us go to preaching practical duties ; it makes but little difference what a man believes so long as his life is right. Our knowledge at the best is fragmentary and uncertain ; let us recognize this, and let us not try to force it upon other men besides. And up to a certain point at least, as a protest against dogmatism, this idea is true and admirable enough. Certainly we ought not to lose sight of our own fallibility ; humility is an intellectual virtue which might with profit be cultivated more carefully, even among liberal thinkers. Still one cannot help feeling that creeds have been dismissed in somewhat too contemptuous a way ; one hardly likes to treat his beliefs in so cavalier a fashion. It is true, no doubt, that my conceptions of truth are far from being perfect ; but

then they are all I have, and I cannot be wholly indifferent to them. One must protest against making tolerance simply indifference about one's beliefs ; whatever it may be or may not be, it surely is not this. The conviction that the truth which I see, others will come to see besides, the desire that this should be so, surely this is not something that one could wish to see driven out of the world. It goes hard if one may not be sure that the truth will conquer in the end ; and, with all readiness to be corrected, what can I know of truth beyond what seems true to me, my belief and creed ? This at least is what the most of us act upon, nor do I know that it is much worse to anathematize my neighbor because he does not accept my creed, than it is to abuse him because he declines to do without a creed altogether. Tolerance, therefore, one may say again, whatever it may be, is not indifference about belief. It is not true that what a man believes makes no difference with him ; it may possibly make a great difference, and usually it does make a difference of some sort. If there is any such thing as truth at all, one certainly must wish for men to know it.

And yet for all that, tolerance in religion is certainly a good thing, and one is rather concerned to know in how far tolerance and zeal may go together. We are often told that ours is a tolerant age. I do not know ; perhaps it is true. But one cannot help thinking that what tolerance the Church possesses, it has gained somewhat at the expense of its logic. What right, indeed, has the Church to be tolerant ? If a man's salvation depends upon his accepting certain beliefs, can there be any freedom of thought which is not really license ? Questionings, doubts, these belong where truth is uncertain ; here it is only to be accepted, and every devi-



ation from it is dangerous. I do not think, however, that the Church has been wrong in growing more tolerant in recent years ; on the contrary, it has been quite right in doing this, and the mistake lies wholly in its logic. The Church has not been wrong in making much of doctrines, but it has been fatally wrong in connecting doctrines with salvation. If it had followed Jesus it never would have done this ; but Jesus' view unfortunately was too simple to satisfy the ingenuity of his followers, who were for having a philosophy, a theology, that should speak with authority : and whereas Jesus had thought of salvation as character, as the growth of a man into the divine life, the theologians came to look upon the other side of it ; they were anxious to escape from the punishment of their sins, and they called this salvation. And looking at salvation in this way, it was inevitable that they should make belief the starting-point for it ; it is only when we get back to Jesus' view that the matter of belief will adjust itself. No man at any definite time can say what his beliefs shall be. He only can seek out the evidence, and then let his beliefs shape themselves as they will ; how they shape themselves will depend upon very many things which are outside himself. But a man can always say that he will recognize what is honorable and just, that he will follow this as truly as he can, and model his life upon it ; and by doing this he is following the directions of Jesus, and the only directions which Jesus gave. This is not to say that belief is not a part of salvation, or that a man is all that he is capable of becoming, so long as what he believes is not in harmony with reality. Not this at all ; but belief cannot be manufactured to order, and it is something which very often must come at the end

rather than at the beginning, which is not the cause of salvation so much as it is the result of it. The Church, on the contrary, has wished to force a theology on every one from the outset ; it has not recognized that belief is a growth just as character is a growth, that the accepting of truth in such liberal quantities renders it impossible to assimilate it and make it a part of ourselves, that such an acceptance is not believing, but only saying that we believe. And the course which this has led to is so manifestly unwise that one would think even the Church might have seen its lack of wisdom. A young man is beginning to think for himself, and he is overwhelmed by doubts and contradictions. What now shall the Church say to him ? shall it say, Hold fast to your belief in goodness, live up to all the faith that is in you ; and that you may do this the better, come in with us, and whether you can believe in God and the future, or not, we will help you and sympathize with your difficulties,—this surely might have something in its favor. But no, it does nothing of the sort ; it says to him, We can have no fellowship with you. Go and have your struggle out by yourself, and then, if you find that you can agree with us, come back and we will let you in.

It is just here that the fault lies in most of the discussions we are having on the question of Church union ; men are assuming all the while that the Church, in one way or another, must be founded upon belief. Some writers will have us settle upon the Bible as a basis of union, as if now all sects alike did not appeal to the Bible as their authority, and as if a common Bible could be of any avail without a common principle of interpretation. If we must wait till all Christians can agree upon a creed, I fear we shall have long to wait ;

so long as belief at all is held to be essential, men will not be inclined to limit the number of their beliefs, and the doctrine that has been strong enough to form a sect will not readily give way for the sake of unity. But upon one thing every Christian can unite. That the ideal of character which Jesus represents is the true ideal, that for the realization of this ideal in the individual and in the nation the Church is founded, this surely is a real basis of union, quite as strong as any compromise about articles of faith. It is true that the Church as a whole will stand for more than this, and it will not need to minimize its doctrines; but without doing this, it still can give to the doctrines their proper place. Similarity of belief still might determine a man's Church associations, and yet one may doubt whether even this is altogether for the best, whether the association of those who look at truth in different ways would not have its advantages. We have the example of our Unitarian friends, who, with a great deal that is excellent in their creeds, have gone off by themselves,—one cannot help thinking they have lost something in spiritual life. Such association may not indeed have been possible in the past, and it may not now in every case be possible. So long as any one rests his salvation upon his doctrines he cannot always be courteous, for it is a matter of life and death with him. But if once we can give up this idea of salvation, one hardly sees why we may not come to a discussion even of religious truth in a kindly spirit and a spirit of fellowship. This most of all is what we need. There on the one side is the liberal Christian, who will have it that Christianity consists to a considerable extent in not being Orthodox, who is much too ready to show his contempt of tradition, and who appears to think that

his liberalism is a necessary proof of his intellectual superiority ; and there is the conservative Christian, who is inclined to suspect the motives of those who disagree with him,—each of these, it may be, might learn from the other, if only they could be brought together.

The Church has come to a crisis in its history, and whether in the future it is to retain the influence which it has had in the past, will rest very largely with itself. I have confidence that it will not fail ; there are many indications which show that already it is beginning to realize that it has new opportunities and new duties, that it is working under conditions which are fast changing. The theologians who are willing to bring dogmas to the test of history, who are not afraid to look facts in the face, and, best of all, who are coming back more and more to Jesus, and trying to find out what he really stood for, are constantly becoming more numerous. But they still are far too few, and there is still very much that the Church will have to learn ; first of all it must learn that truth is sacred, and that in the search for truth dogma and tradition must be held at their proper value. It has talked glibly of Strauss and Wellhausen, of atheism and rationalism, let it now try to understand what it has been talking about, let it ask itself whether the opinions which it deploras could have had such influence, if they had been wholly wrong and the Church wholly right, let it be less concerned to discover arguments for its own side than to discover truth. I do not complain that the Church refuses to accept new opinions, I complain only because it shows little inclination to be just to them, and because it is too ready to resort to the least convincing of all arguments, misrepresentation and abuse. It is not well that the Church should change at once its old creeds ; it is not well that

those who are satisfied by the old forms of truth should be made to exchange them for new ones. But those who no longer find that the old forms satisfy their needs, who do not find them in harmony with the new light that has come from science and philosophy, these also have their rights, and it surely is well that these rights should be respected.







## *PART I.—THE SOURCES.*

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### CHAPTER I.

#### THE SYNOPTIC GOSPELS.

IF we are to obtain any secure results about the life of Jesus, it will be necessary first to make a careful examination of the sources which furnish the facts relating to that life, and in particular to find out on whose authority they come to us, and whether we have to fall back on the words of men who really had the means of knowing the truth about the matter. And this leads at once to the problem which of all the New Testament problems is perhaps the most perplexing, perplexing because the answer to it depends upon an immense number of separate points which themselves may be decided in altogether different ways, and which all of them must be kept in mind, and be placed side by side, in order to see the bearing which they have; so that a special preparation one really needs, if the question is to be perfectly clear to him. And, indeed, a strict demonstration, one which shall do away with all ground for dispute, is hardly to be looked for. The best one can do in such a case is to



establish probabilities, and the result must be judged, not by its being demonstrably certain in any case, but by the number of cases to which it can be made to apply with naturalness. At any rate the solution must be attempted, for upon it, in a very large degree, one's conception of the Gospels will have to depend.

What then is the problem that calls for solution? Stated very briefly it is this. Our first three Gospels, the Gospels which sometimes are known as the synoptic Gospels, to distinguish them from the Gospel of John, are connected with one another in a very curious way, which commentators from early times have noticed, and have made more or less satisfactory attempts to explain. While each of the Gospels contains matter which is not to be found in either of the other two, yet there is general resemblance between them which is very decided. In all of them there is the same general order of events. There are long sections which correspond very largely word for word, and this verbal agreement, in a greater or less degree, extends to nearly all of the material which is common to two or more of the Gospels. But alongside of this resemblance there are differences also, and the differences are just as decided as the resemblances are. Not a few narratives are placed in quite different connections by different Evangelists. The most of Jesus' sayings are assigned to two or more different occasions. It is very seldom that narratives are absolutely identical, one an exact copy of the other, and in the midst of verbal resemblances there often are strange differences, which it has taken all the ingenuity of commentators to keep from the appearance of discrepancy. It is evident that we have here a complicated literary problem, which it will not be possible to solve without



going into a somewhat tedious and laborious comparison of details; but before doing this let us look at a few more general considerations, which will help to clear the ground.

All explanations, it will be seen, would fall roughly into three classes. Either our Gospels are quite independent of one another, or they are not; and if they are not independent, then either they must have used a common source or sources, or they must, along with this perhaps, have made use also of one another. In our own country it is the first view which is by all means the most popular one, and it is not hard to see why this should be so. At first glance it might appear to be the most natural view, as certainly it is the simplest. Not very many men have either the time or the inclination for the somewhat complex critical processes which are necessary for understanding the basis on which either of the other theories rests, and perhaps it is true that the very different results which the German critics have reached are not calculated to impress one with the accuracy of the methods which they use. But, what also is an important reason, it is the view which almost of necessity follows certain theories of inspiration, the only one that can very well be held when criticism has chiefly to do with harmonizing. The manner in which this theory would seek to explain the connection between the three Gospels is briefly as follows. The repetition of sayings and of incidents from the life of Jesus naturally would play an important part in the teaching of the Apostles; and in the poverty of the Aramaic dialect these would tend to become more or less stereotyped in form, and in course of time would grow into a considerable body of tradition. For a while this oral teaching would be suffi-

cient, but as the Church grew, and tradition came less to be relied on, a need would be felt for more authoritative records ; and to meet this need, it is supposed that about the same time our three Gospels appeared. In this way it is sought to explain both the resemblances and the differences, the former by the fact that all the narratives were drawn from a common body of tradition, the latter by the natural discrepancies to be expected in independent reports of oral teaching.

Now no doubt this theory has in it a certain amount of truth. The words of Jesus, at any rate, must early have become to a certain extent fixed in form, for it would have been impossible, when the Gospel literature first arose, for any one to reproduce the longer sayings and discourses which have come down to us, without some such oral tradition as this to fall back upon. But the more one tries to make this serve for explaining the whole problem, the less he will find that it will answer. For however it may seem at first to account for the verbal resemblances, it by no means accounts so well for the resemblances in order. Let us, for example, compare roughly Mark with Luke. Up to Luke 9 : 17, we find that Luke has nearly every incident that Mark has, and, with a very few exceptions, in the same sequence. Then, after omitting a section from Mark, Luke follows his order up to 9 : 51. Then comes a long section which is peculiar to Luke, but at the end of this section he takes up Mark again where he left off, and follows Mark's order to the end. That is, we may put it as a general rule, to which there are hardly a handful of exceptions, that the sections which are common to Luke and Mark are placed by them in the same relative position to one another.

Now clearly this similarity cannot be accidental. The order of events, as well as the events themselves, must have been a part of this oral tradition. And so we have to suppose that it was something very different from what we ordinarily understand tradition to be. We must suppose that it was something like the oral tradition of the Rabbis, something settled down to the wording and to the sequence of events, even to the connecting links between the different narratives, and then taught by the Apostles and learned by their disciples, and everywhere recognized as authoritative. We cannot think of such a narrative as this springing up naturally from random teachings ; it must have been moulded positively into a definite form. Then we must suppose that there were schools where this narrative was carefully committed to memory by the disciples ; single narratives they might have caught simply by listening to them, but a long and intricate series of events they only could have come to know by memorizing it. But surely all this elaborate machinery is very unlikely, natural enough in the Rabbinical schools, where religion had come to be a dead thing, but not natural in the freedom and spontaneity of the Apostolic age. What is more important, we have no trace of anything at all like it, either in the New Testament or outside of it. If any such tradition was widely spread, we certainly should expect to find it cropping out in the Acts or in the Epistles, as well as in the writings of the Fathers, a little later on, but no such thing do we find. The Apostles appear to have confined themselves very largely in their preaching to the great historic facts of the Messiahship of Jesus, his Death, his Resurrection ; and incidents from Jesus' life, and words of his, they only made use of as occasion

called for them, for edification, and not with any wish to settle details of history. And it is such a clumsy way of going to work ; the Apostles, if they went to all this trouble must surely have thought that such a record was very important, but why then did they not think of writing ? it would have been infinitely easier, and it would have served their purpose even better. This is a very different case from the case of the Rab-bis, where the tradition had grown up very gradually by small accretions ; here the tradition had to be formed outright as well as learned. Besides all this, if the form was so important, how is it that our three reports, which at least, one would think, must have come to us at third or fourth hand, after all the care taken to secure exactness, should show such decided differences. And it is quite conclusive that the differences, as will be seen later, so often show that they are dependent upon literary motives, motives which would have no play in oral teaching, that we can hardly doubt that the Evangelists actually had documents before them.

As for the second theory in its simplest form, that all our Gospels drew from a common source, it never has been able to explain enough to make it necessary to delay upon it. It may be that here too is a partial truth, but it will not serve to explain the whole problem, unless it is combined with the third hypothesis, that the Gospels in some way have made use of one another. And indeed this is only what we might have looked for. Every author is supposed to make use of those who have written before him ; Luke certainly found a number of such predecessors, as he tells us himself, men who were at least as near the Apostolic age as he was, and a refusal to make use of their labors only would have been to lessen the value of his own

work. That some such interdependence there was then will be assumed, but just what it was is still to be determined. The possibilities, as we see, are numerous, and it will be well to begin by excluding some of them, so as to simplify the question as much as possible.

In the first place, then, is Mark taken from Matthew or Luke, or from both of them together? At once we say that this is not natural to suppose. For Mark is by far the shortest of the Gospels, with comparatively little that is peculiar to itself, and it is not easy to see why any one should have thought it necessary to abridge the fuller accounts which he had before him, without adding anything that was essentially new. To get the history within a shorter compass must, it would seem, have been an object with him; but there is no good reason why he should have wished to do this, and, besides, it is not always borne out by the way in which he goes to work. For, instead of condensing the narratives, he very often expands them; he adds details which are simply picturesque, and he even introduces some new incidents of his own, though none of these have any great importance. That Mark is an abstract of either of the other Gospels singly we may dismiss at once; for if we compare Mark with Luke, for instance, we shall find that over and over again Luke is plainly secondary, so that Mark's account could not have been derived from him. One instance will be sufficient to show this. Luke has this saying of Jesus: "No man rendeth a piece from a new garment, and putteth it upon an old garment; else he will rend the new, and also the piece from the new will not agree with the old."<sup>1</sup> But Mark gives the saying

<sup>1</sup> Luke 5:36.

in a somewhat different form: "No man seweth a piece of undressed cloth on an old garment: else that which should fill it up taketh from it, the new from the old, and a worse rent is made."<sup>1</sup> It is clear that Mark has the original form, and so he could not well be copying here from Luke. And Mark cannot have drawn wholly from Matthew, for just the same reason that he cannot have drawn from Luke, because there are too many passages in which Mark is plainly original. So when, instead of the question which Mark has, "Why callest thou me good?"<sup>2</sup> Matthew makes Jesus say, "Why askest thou me concerning that which is good?"<sup>3</sup> it is plain that Mark did not get his more original form from the other Gospel.

And it is not much easier if we suppose that Mark is combining the other Gospels; besides what has been said already, it is not possible to show any principle on which he makes this combination. It must have been extremely arbitrary. Sometimes he follows one of his sources throughout a narrative, jumping over to the other for a single word or phrase, and again he forms an intricate mosaic from the two. Such a way of going to work is very improbable, when we consider that this combination and revision of two narratives which go over essentially the same ground is not something incidental to a larger task, but must have been one of the author's main purposes in writing; and it is all the more improbable as Mark has a definite style of his own, and has not brought over any of the peculiarities, sometimes very marked, which distinguish the Gospels from which it is supposed he is compiling. Nor,

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<sup>1</sup> Mk. 2:21.

<sup>2</sup> Mk. 10:18.

<sup>3</sup> Matt. 19:17.



again, is it probable that an editor would have been able in so large a majority of cases to escape the secondary touches in both of his authorities, following Luke when Matthew was secondary, and *vice versa*.

And it is equally unlikely that there is any direct connection between Matthew and Luke; at most it can have been an acquaintance which affected details, and not the real substance of the narrative. For as one is sometimes plainly secondary and unoriginal, and sometimes the other, neither could have been the primary source of the other, just as neither could have been the source for Mark. And this is especially evident when we look at the great body of sayings which are wanting in Mark, but which Matthew and Luke have in common. These sayings must have come from a common source, but it is also clear that neither Evangelist could have got them from the other. Luke's text to a very large extent is so evidently a free rendering, almost a paraphrase sometimes, that it is quite impossible that Matthew's more original version could have come from it<sup>1</sup>; and, on the other hand, the original connection which Luke gives to very many of the sayings he never could have guessed if he had taken them from Matthew.<sup>2</sup> And it becomes especially probable that there is not even a slight connection between the two, when we look at the account which each gives of the birth of Jesus, and of his appearances after the resurrection. It hardly seems as if either, when he wrote his account, could have known anything of the other. Matthew, for example, tells of an

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<sup>1</sup> Luke 6 : 35-38, 46-49; 11 : 21, 22, 36, 47, 48; 13 : 28, 29; 15 : 3-7, etc.

<sup>2</sup> Luke 11 : 2, 9; 12 : 2, 58; 13 : 24-29; 14 : 34; 15 : 4, etc.

appearance in Galilee which Luke seems expressly to exclude.<sup>1</sup> And this is particularly clear in the narrative of the infancy. It is not so much that the narratives of the birth and infancy of Jesus differ from each other in the two Gospels, as that they are in evident ignorance of each other. According to Luke the parents of Jesus openly present him in the Temple, and then return quietly home to Nazareth; Luke knows nothing of any plot of Herod, or of any flight into Egypt. Matthew, on the other hand, supposes that Bethlehem was the home of Joseph and Mary. Here Jesus lives for some little time; and when, after the return from Egypt, they go to Nazareth, Matthew has no suspicion that they had ever lived there before. So that for neither of them would it have been possible to write as he did, if either had been acquainted with the narrative of the other.

So far then the results are only negative. We have found that Mark is not taken from Matthew or Luke, and that Matthew and Luke are not taken one from the other. But when we go a step farther, and ask, Do Matthew and Luke make use of Mark? we no longer find the same objections. Certainly, so far as the general narrative goes, both of the Gospels might seem to have incorporated Mark almost entire. Up to Mark 6:45, nearly the whole of Mark's narrative is found in Luke, and, as has been said, with two or three exceptions in the same relative order of events. Then Mark 6:46-8:27 is omitted, but reasons for this can easily be found, and one verse from the omitted section Luke has in the latter part of his book,<sup>2</sup> just as

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<sup>1</sup> Luke 24:50-53; Acts 1:4.

<sup>2</sup> Luke 12:1.



when in other cases he leaves out shorter passages, he shows afterwards that he is acquainted at least with portions of them.<sup>1</sup> And the awkward way in which he tries to bridge over the gap shows clearly enough that he is making an omission. For Mark reads, "And straightway he constrained his disciples to enter into the boat, and to go before him unto the other side to Bethsaida, while he himself sendeth the multitude away. And after he had taken leave of them, he departed into the mountain to pray."<sup>2</sup> Now Luke stops just before this last sentence, and passes to Mark 8 : 27, where Jesus is travelling with his disciples through the villages of Cæsarea Philippi, but he joins the two together in this fashion : "And it came to pass, as he was praying alone, the disciples were with him. And he asked them, saying, Who do the multitudes say that I am?"<sup>3</sup> Here we see he gets his connection, but it is somewhat at the expense of the meaning ; for when Jesus was in the mountains he might have been alone, but he hardly could be alone when the disciples were with him. Finally, from Mark 8 : 27 to the end of the book, we find practically the whole in Luke. And in Matthew the case is not much different. In the first part of Matthew nearly all of Mark's material is present, although the order is not very closely followed ; and yet even here there are long sections where the order corresponds.<sup>4</sup> But from Mark 6 : 14 to the end, the narratives of Mark, with a very few exceptions, are found in Matthew, and, as before, in the same order.

<sup>1</sup> Luke 12 : 10 ; 16 : 16-18.

<sup>2</sup> Mk. 6 : 45, 46.

<sup>3</sup> Luke 9 : 18.

<sup>4</sup> Mk. 1 : 1-28 ; 2 : 1-3 : 5 ; 3 : 22-4 : 34.

And when we come to compare the Gospels more critically, we shall find the evidence for a dependence on Mark appearing constantly. This secondary character is perhaps rather more apparent in Luke than it is in Matthew ; if we examine Luke carefully, traces of Mark may be discovered lying everywhere at the base of it. The proof of this in detail has been given most elaborately by Professor Weiss, and we shall not attempt to go over it here ; but as a single example the story of Jairus' daughter may be taken, as it is given by Luke and Mark.

And when Jesus had crossed over again in the boat unto the other side, a great multitude were gathered unto him : and he was by the sea. And there cometh one of the rulers of the synagogue Jairus by name ; and seeing him, he falleth at his feet, and beseecheth him much, saying, My little daughter is at the point of death : I pray thee, that thou come and lay thy hands on her, that she may be made whole, and live. And he went with him ; and a great multitude followed him, and they thronged him. And a woman which had an issue of blood twelve years, and had suffered many things of many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse, having heard the things

And as Jesus returned, the multitude welcomed him ; for they were all waiting for him. And behold there came a man named Jairus, and he was a ruler of the synagogue : and he fell down at Jesus' feet and besought him to come into his house ; for he had an only daughter, about twelve years of age, and she lay a-dying. But as he went the multitude thronged him. And a woman having an issue of blood twelve years, who had spent all her living upon physicians, and could not be healed of any, came behind him and touched the border of his garment : and immediately the issue of her blood stanch'd. And Jesus said, Who is it that touched me ? And when all denied Peter said, and they that were with him, Master,

concerning Jesus, came in the crowd behind, and touched his garment. For she said, If I touch but his garments, I shall be made whole. And straightway, the fountain of her blood was dried up, and she felt in her body that she was healed of her plague. And straightway Jesus, perceiving in himself that the power proceeding from him had gone forth, turned him about in the crowd and said, Who touched my garments? And his disciples said unto him, Thou seest the multitude thronging thee, and sayst thou, Who touched me? And he looked round about to see her that had done this thing. But the woman, fearing and trembling, knowing what had been done to her, came and fell down before him, and told him all the truth. And he said unto her, Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace, and be whole of thy plague. While he yet spake, they come from the ruler of the synagogue's house, saying, Thy daughter is dead: why troublest thou the Master further! But Jesus, not heeding the words spoken, saith unto the ruler of the synagogue, Fear not, only believe. And he suffered no man to follow with him,

the multitudes press thee and crush thee. But Jesus said, Some one did touch me: for I perceived that power had gone forth from me. And when the woman saw that she was not hid, she came trembling, and falling down before him declared in the presence of all the people for what cause she touched him, and how she was healed immediately. And he said unto her, Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace. While he yet spake, there cometh one from the ruler of the synagogue's house, saying, Thy daughter is dead; trouble not the Master. But Jesus, hearing it, answered him, Fear not: only believe, and she shall be made whole. And when he came to the house, he suffered not any man to enter in with him, save Peter, and John, and James, and the father of the maiden and her mother. And all were weeping and bewailing her: but he said, Weep not; for she is not dead, but sleepeth. And they laughed him to scorn, knowing that she was dead. But he, taking her by the hand, called, saying, Maiden, arise. And her spirit returned, and she rose up immediately: and he commanded that something be

save Peter, and James, and John the brother of James. And they come to the house of the ruler of the synagogue; and he beholdeth a tumult, and many weeping and wailing greatly. And when he was entered in, he saith unto them, Why make ye a tumult and weep? the child is not dead, but sleepeth. And they laughed him to scorn. But he, having put them all forth, taketh the father of the child and the mother, and them that were with him, and goeth in where the child was. And taking the child by the hand, he saith unto her, Talitha cumi; which is, being interpreted, Damsel, I say unto thee, Arise. And straightway the damsel rose up and walked; for she was twelve years old. And they were amazed straightway with a great amazement. And he charged them much that no man should know this; and he commanded that something should be given her to eat. Mark 5 : 21-43.

given her to eat. And her parents were amazed: but he charged them to tell no man what had been done. Luke, 8 : 40-56.

Without going into too great detail, some of the points may be noticed in which Luke's account is secondary. In the first place it is an "only" daughter, and this looks like an embellishment to make the scene a trifle more pathetic. Then the girl's age, which

Mark has a reason for giving, in connection with the ability of the girl to walk, Luke brings in at the outset by anticipation. The statement in Luke that the crowds thronged Jesus, most naturally requires the accompanying statement in Mark, that they had followed him. In the healing of the issue of blood, Luke makes all answer Jesus' question with a denial, although this takes the wind out of Peter's words, which imply, quite the contrary, that of necessity they must all the time be touching him; and the explanation which Mark gives of Jesus' question, rightly an explanation of his own, and given in connection with the question itself, Luke puts into Jesus' own mouth. The description of the woman's fear follows most naturally after the statement which Mark has given, and which Luke omits, "And Jesus looked round about to see her that had done this thing." The expression "all the truth" is amplified in Luke. Passing again to the continuation of the first story, the words of Jesus, "Fear not: only believe," are made less dramatic by Luke's addition, "and she shall be made whole"; and this expression, too, borrowed from an earlier part of Mark's story, where it refers to recovery from sickness, is not so appropriate now that the girl is dead. Then Mark tells how Jesus entered the house, rebuked the mourners, and, after putting them out, entered into the dead girl's chamber. Luke confuses this in two ways. "And when he came into the house, he suffered not any man to enter in with him," says Luke, and doubtless he refers to entering the chamber, though he does not make it perfectly plain. But after this he tells about the conversation with the mourners, when Jesus already had left the mourners behind him; he reverses the natural order of relation, as it appears in

Mark. Again, he adds an explanatory clause, "knowing that she was dead"; and the statement, "he commanded something to be given her to eat," is far more effective from a literary point of view when it ends the story. Finally, the charge that no man should be told the deed is evidently connected in Mark's mind with the stopping of the multitudes as soon as the death is announced, for of course the charge would be a waste of words if the house was thronged with people; with this, too, goes Mark's statement that the mourners were put out. But Luke, while he retains the charge, has omitted what leads up to it.

Now what we find in this narrative we can find throughout. Passages in Luke appear in a clearly more original form in the second Gospel. Details are added which are intended to explain the older account and to make it more exact.<sup>1</sup> Even in narratives peculiar to himself Luke shows traces of Mark's influence.<sup>2</sup> Let us look only at one case of this, which is by no means the clearest case that might be given, but which still has some probability in its favor. In Mark the chapter on the second coming concludes with these words: "Watch therefore! for ye know not when the Lord of the house cometh, whether at even, or at midnight, or at cock-crowing, or in the morning; lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping. And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch."<sup>3</sup> What we wish especially to notice are these two phrases, "at even, or at midnight, or at cock-crowing, or in the morning," and "What I

<sup>1</sup> Luke 3: 15, 22; 4: 5, 6, 13; 5: 17; 6: 19; 7: 21; 8: 46, 53; 9: 31, 32; 11: 18; 20: 38; 22: 45, 51; 21: 20, 24.

<sup>2</sup> Luke 4: 22b, 24, cf. Mk. 6: 3, 4; 5: 10, cf. Mk. 1: 19; 7: 37, cf. Mk. 14: 3.

<sup>3</sup> Mk. 13: 35-37.



say unto you I say unto all"; the only parallels to these phrases are found in a single passage in Luke. "And if he shall come in the second watch," says Jesus, "and if in the third, and find them so, blessed are those servants"; and shortly after Peter asks, "Lord, speakest thou this parable unto us, or even unto all?"<sup>1</sup> But in both cases the words come in more naturally in Mark. The discourse on the second coming, as is shown by the warning which is thrown in, "Let him that readeth understand," is addressed to Christians generally, so that such an ending to it is very appropriate; as a question from Peter, on the other hand, one cannot see that it has any very distinct meaning. And the probability of this conclusion will be strengthened when we show, as we shall try to do in another place, that the whole of the passage in Luke is only a free condensation of a longer discourse.

And this connection with Mark appears too in cases where Luke has not wholly understood his source. This may be seen in a phrase which Mark uses in the account which he gives of the first day at Capernaum: "And they were astonished at his teaching, for he taught them as having authority, and not as the scribes."<sup>2</sup> Luke, in his parallel account, also uses the same word, *ἐξουσία*, but it is with a different meaning: "And they were astonished at his teaching, for his word was with authority."<sup>3</sup> The narrative goes on to tell how the people, in surprise, exclaimed, "With authority and power he commandeth the unclean spirits, and they come out"; and this new meaning of the

<sup>1</sup> Luke 12: 38, 41.

<sup>2</sup> Mk. 1: 22.

<sup>3</sup> Luke 4: 32.



word, implying miraculous power, Luke has carried back into the preceding phrase, as will be evident if one will compare the similarity of the wording in the two places. But it is clear that the word ought to refer, as in Mark, to his teaching, and not to his miraculous power, if for no other reason because the miracle had not yet been performed. When, too, Luke, in the narrative of the entry to Jerusalem, makes the "certain of those who stood there," of Mark's account, the owners of the colt, it seems like an inference, and a mistaken inference, from Mark's words; for the way in which the objection is made, and the failure to recognize Jesus' disciples, agrees better with the character of bystanders, and it is more likely that there were a number of bystanders than that there were several owners of the colt. Mark, again, in the account of the paralytic man, mentions in the middle of his narrative that certain scribes were present<sup>1</sup>; but Luke anticipates this remark at the beginning of his account, and explains it as a concerted meeting of Pharisees and scribes out of every village of Galilee and Judæa and Jerusalem,<sup>2</sup> which can hardly be considered likely. Another misunderstanding occurs in the account of the crucifixion, where the offering of vinegar, according to Mark's account, was far from being intended in mockery, as Luke supposes; and where the symbolism which Mark attaches to the rending of the veil of the Temple is clearly not understood, for it is spoken of as taking place before Jesus died. And, finally, the remark at the close of Mark's Gospel, "And they said nothing to any one, for they were afraid," Luke must have read, for he tries to get around it by what evidently is a mere

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<sup>1</sup> Mk. 2 : 6.

<sup>2</sup> Luke 5 : 17.

makeshift: "Now they were Mary Magdalene, and Joanna, and Mary the mother of James; *and the other women with them* told these things to the Apostles."

The same phenomena are to be found in Matthew also. Here, too, it is clear that we have to do with a narrative which in a very large measure is secondary and dependent, and that it is dependent upon a source which at least strongly resembles our Mark. Incidents which in Mark are simply placed side by side, the first Evangelist supposes are arranged chronologically, and once this leads him into a curious mistake. Mark, after he has told how the disciples were sent out two by two, mentions the effect which Jesus' fame had upon Herod, who saw in him John the Baptist risen again. This gives him an opportunity for telling the story of how John had been murdered, an event which he represents as having taken place some time before. After this digression he goes back to his narrative, and relates what happened on the disciples' return, namely, the journey to the other side of the lake.<sup>1</sup> Now Matthew also has the same events, but because this journey and the beheading of John are placed by Mark together, he supposes that they are connected in time, and that one was the cause of the other.<sup>2</sup> But he forgets that the story of John's murder had carried the narrative backwards, so that really he is making the disciples return before they set out. So, too, he has changes and additions,<sup>3</sup> sometimes exaggerations,<sup>4</sup> where Mark's text is undoubtedly original; the addition of a colt, in the account of the entry into Jeru-

<sup>1</sup> Mk. 6 : 7-30.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. 14 : 13.

<sup>3</sup> Matt. 3 : 7 ; 13 : 55, 58 ; 20 : 20 ; 21 : 2, 19 ; 22 : 7, 11-13, etc.

<sup>4</sup> Matt. 14 : 21.

saalem, in order to make a closer correspondence with prophecy, is a very evident case. Again there are a fairly large number of instances where Matthew's text reads a little unnaturally, or shows an actual misconception, which we can explain easily by comparing him with Mark. So, for example, in the dispute about fasting,<sup>1</sup> Matthew makes the disciples of John the questioners, although this is highly improbable. But if we turn to Mark we find that he says: "And John's disciples and the Pharisees were fasting. And they come and say unto him, Why do John's disciples and the disciples of the Pharisees fast, but thy disciples fast not?"<sup>2</sup> Now it is clear that the "they" of Mark is indefinite, or perhaps it refers to the Pharisees who have been spoken of in the narrative just before; but it is also clear that a reader might refer it to John's disciples, who are mentioned in the preceding sentence. Again, at the end of one of the Sabbath cures in Matthew occur the words: "So that it is permitted to do good on the Sabbath day."<sup>3</sup> But in Mark the same account is introduced by the question, "Is it lawful to do good on the Sabbath day, or to do harm?"<sup>4</sup> and to this question the words in Matthew seem to point. Another case not quite so evident occurs in the story of the rich young man. "It is hard," so Matthew reads, "for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven. And again I say unto you, it is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye."<sup>5</sup> In Mark, however, this "again" comes in much more naturally:

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<sup>1</sup> Matt. 9:14.

<sup>2</sup> Mk. 2:18.

<sup>3</sup> Matt. 12:12.

<sup>4</sup> Mk. 3:4.

<sup>5</sup> Matt. 19:23, 24.

“And Jesus looked round about, and saith to his disciples, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God ! And the disciples were amazed at his words. But Jesus answered *again*, and saith unto them, Children, how hard is it to enter into the kingdom of God.”<sup>1</sup> One more example may be given, which perhaps is to be explained in the same way. In Matthew, at the close of the address to the Twelve, is a saying which runs as follows : “Whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only, in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward.”<sup>2</sup> Jesus has been speaking to the disciples directly, “Whosoever receiveth *you*, receiveth me” ; and the way in which he changes now to the expression, “one of these little ones,” does not strike one as at all natural. But in Mark the saying also occurs in a different connection, and here it reads : “Whosoever shall give *you* to drink a cup of cold water.”<sup>3</sup> But just before it we find the saying, which also, in a slightly different form, stands just before it in Matthew : “Whosoever shall receive one of such little children in my name, receiveth me” ; and here it is to actual children that the saying is referred. So that it probably is from this passage in Mark that Matthew borrows his expression.

And another fact also points to this same dependence, the fact that in Mark there is a definite plot, a clearly developed conception of the course of Jesus' ministry, which Mark has followed throughout, but which the other Evangelists have disarranged. Mark shows how

<sup>1</sup> Mk. 10 : 23, 24.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. 10 : 42.

<sup>3</sup> Mk. 9 : 41.

Jesus' fame began at Capernaum, and kept constantly spreading ; he traces the development of the Pharisees' hostility, and of the disciples' belief ; he carefully reserves the confession of Jesus' Messiahship for the culminating day at Cæsarea Philippi, and when before this the demons salute Jesus as the Messiah, he makes Jesus sternly enjoin silence upon them. Then, from the day at Cæsarea Philippi, the whole is overshadowed by the approaching death ; the relations with the Pharisees reach their height in a series of attacks and counter-attacks, beginning with the triumphal entry into Jerusalem, and ending in the success of the Pharisees' plots : but even in the midst of apparent defeat, the promise of victory appears, in the words of the angel at the empty tomb. Any such clear-cut plan, with indications all the time appearing that point to it, we shall not find in the other Gospels, and yet traces of this plan which Mark follows are constantly cropping out. Mark, for example, tells how, just before the choice of the Apostles, Jesus healed "many of the sick. And the unclean spirits, wheresoever they beheld him, fell down before him and cried, 'Thou art the Son of God. And he charged them much that they should not make him known.'" <sup>1</sup> Here the prohibition is closely connected with Mark's view of Jesus' Messiahship. But Matthew, in the same account, <sup>2</sup> tells how Jesus "healed all the sick," and "charged them that they should not make him known," although this has no meaning, because Jesus' healing ministry he could not possibly have kept a secret if he had wished to do so. Then the throngs which at-

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<sup>1</sup> Mk. 3 : 11, 12.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. 12 : 15, 16. *Cf.* connection in both Gospels with defence against Pharisees.

tended Jesus, Mark is very fond of describing. He tells how Jesus must rise up a great while before day in order to escape them ; how they crowd about him so that none can approach ; so that he has not leisure so much as to eat ; how he can no longer openly enter into a city, but is without in desert places, and even here the people come from every quarter.<sup>1</sup> The other Evangelists retain some of the elements of this description, but they do not at all appreciate it. Luke, in his parallel to this last passage, only says, "But so much the more went abroad the report concerning him ; and great multitudes came together to hear, and to be healed of their infirmities. But he withdrew himself in the deserts and prayed"<sup>2</sup> : he misses entirely what Mark portrays so vividly, and we should hardly see why he spoke of the desert at all, if we had not Mark to compare him with.

Sometimes also we have evidence that Mark was used by both of the other Evangelists in a single passage, which shows at the same time that Matthew and Luke did not use each other. One such case there is in the account of the call of Levi : "It came to pass," says Mark,<sup>3</sup> "that he sat at meat in his house"<sup>3</sup> ; but whose house is meant, there is at least chance for doubt. And the other Evangelists we find actually have interpreted it in different ways, Matthew supposing that it means Jesus' own house, and Luke that it is the house of Levi.<sup>4</sup> And in the same way a parabolic saying of Jesus', which in the second Gospel is

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<sup>1</sup> Mk. 1 : 45.

<sup>2</sup> Luke 5 : 15, 16.

<sup>3</sup> Mk. 2 : 15.

<sup>4</sup> Matt. 9 : 10 ; Luke 5 : 29.



given without remark—"Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees"<sup>1</sup>—is explained by Matthew as the teaching of the Pharisees, while Luke understands it to mean their hypocrisy.<sup>2</sup> Probably Mark means neither the teachings of the Pharisees nor their hypocrisy, for he adds, "And of the leaven of Herod," an allusion which points to the plots which Mark already has mentioned, and which the Pharisees and Herodians had entered into against Jesus, to the suspicions, therefore, which they were instilling among the people.

And in two other passages, also, this may be seen, one of them the passage with which Mark starts in his Gospel, the account of the first day at Capernaum. Here Mark gives a consistent picture, whose relation to the rest of his design is evident, forming, as it does, a vivid description of the beginning of Jesus' ministry, with the first awakenings of belief, and the foretaste of his coming popularity. Jesus calls his four disciples, and with them enters their native town, Capernaum. It is the Sabbath, and he enters the synagogue to teach. The people are amazed at his teaching, and their amazement is increased when Jesus performs his first miracle. After the service he goes to the home of his new disciple, where another miracle takes place, the healing of Peter's mother-in-law. The fame of these miracles spreads throughout the city, and at sunset the whole city comes together to be healed. But Jesus has not come to Capernaum only, and the next morning he hurries off to carry the Gospel to other cities also. But both of the other Evangelists succeed in spoiling this narrative; in the first place they do

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<sup>1</sup> Mk. 8: 15.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. 16: 12; Luke 12: 1.



not notice that it is meant as an introductory piece, and they put other parts of Jesus' ministry before it. Then both have separated the call of Peter from the visit to Peter's house. Luke has another version of the call, which he brings in later on, so that here the name of Simon comes up suddenly, without anything to tell us who Simon is. Matthew again, who has dropped the account of the Sabbath cure in the synagogue, still makes the people wait till sunset before they come together, although, judging from the narrative which he places just before, it was not a Sabbath day at all; and to Luke the fact that it was a Sabbath day has become a little obscured, for he says not "when the sun had set," but "while it was setting." And, finally, Luke in the conclusion misses Mark's intention, for he says that the people, and not the disciples, sought Jesus and found him. But even this has an explanation in Mark; in Mark Peter tells Jesus, "All are seeking thee."

The other case which we spoke of occurs in the account of the last days at Jerusalem, in the discussions which Jesus had with his opponents. The last question which is put to Jesus runs as follows:

And one of the scribes came, and heard them questioning together, and knowing that he had answered them well, asked him, What commandment is the first of all? Jesus answered, The first is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God, the Lord is one: and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength. The second is this: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these. And the scribe said unto him, Of a truth, Master, thou hast well said that he is one; and there is none other but he: and to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the strength, and to love his neighbor as

himself, is much more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices. And when Jesus saw that he answered discreetly, he said unto him, Thou art not far from the kingdom of God. And no man after that durst ask him any question.<sup>1</sup>

Let us see how the other Evangelists treat this passage. Matthew, for a reason which will be suggested in another place, gives the first part of the incident, but he omits the lawyer's answer; and then, just as Mark does, he gives a question which Jesus in turn puts to the Pharisees. But that he may not lose entirely what he has omitted, the last sentence of it, "neither durst any man from that day forth ask him any more questions," he places at the very end, after the question which Jesus asks. But here it loses the meaning which it has in Mark, and no longer serves as a transition from the questions put by the Pharisees to the counter-attack by Jesus. And Luke leaves out the incident altogether; but he takes a sentence from it, the beginning of the scribe's reply, "Master, thou hast well said," and places it at the end of the preceding incident, the attack by the Sadducees, although here it is by no means so appropriate.

So far, then, there is good reason to believe that both Matthew and Luke have incorporated into their work the narrative of Mark, or, at least, of a book very similar to Mark. There are other indications, it is true, which will have to be considered later on, and which will modify our view somewhat; but these will not affect the general result which has been reached. But now we are prepared to go a step further. For, besides using Mark, it appears that both the Evangelists must have used another document which was distinct from

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<sup>1</sup> Mk. 12 : 28-34.

Mark ; for there is a large amount of material which Mark does not possess, but which is common to both Matthew and Luke ; and by far the largest part of this material is made up of the sayings of Jesus.

Let us now sum up our results. Mark does not know Matthew or Luke, Matthew and Luke do not know each other ; but both make use of an account very similar at least to our Mark, and of another document which contained at any rate many sayings of Jesus. So far the process has been comparatively simple ; but there is one other fact which is a very important one, and which offers no little complication. Not only do Matthew and Luke agree with each other in the case of material which Mark does not possess, but they often agree with each other in opposition to Mark. To put it in another way, in some of the narratives which we have supposed so far that Matthew and Luke derived independently from Mark, they agree with each other instead of with Mark, and Mark's account seems to be a secondary one. There is no need to multiply examples of this at present ; one example will be found in the healing of the epileptic boy,<sup>1</sup> where the correspondence between Matthew and Luke is perfectly evident. How, it must be asked, is this fact to be accounted for ?

There are several ways in which it might be accounted for. It is possible to suppose that our Mark is only a revision of an original Mark, which Matthew and Luke use ; and that when Matthew and Luke agree, they preserve the reading of this original Mark, which the revision has lost. But such a revision is very problematical, and indeed critics are not agreed as to whether it was an abridgment or an enlargement of

<sup>1</sup> Matt. 17 : 14 ff. ; Luke 9 : 37 ff. ; Mk. 9 : 14 ff.

the original ; in either case the theory presents serious difficulties. We cannot well think that the original Mark was shorter, because, with very slight exceptions, Matthew and Luke together contain everything that is found in our present Mark. The original Mark hardly can have been much larger, because, in one of the most important features, the order of events, just as soon as Matthew and Luke cease to agree with our present Mark, they cease to agree with each other. Again, Luke might have known Matthew and copied from him at times, or Matthew might have known Luke. But this we have seen is not at all likely, and, besides, it would only account for the resemblance, and would not account for the secondary character of Mark. Let us apply this to a passage at the beginning of the Gospel, the report of the Baptist's ministry, where Matthew and Luke agree in opposition to the much shorter account of Mark. If this theory is true, then the brief account in Mark came first, and was expanded by one of the later Evangelists, let us say by Matthew ; finally Luke, having both accounts before him, follows Matthew in preference to Mark. But the objection to this is, that Matthew does not read at all like a secondary account, while Mark seems clearly to be only an abridgment of Matthew. But this very passage suggests at once the explanation which we conceive to be the true one. Mark also has before him the original work which the other two Evangelists both use, and from which they draw their sayings ; and when he disagrees with Matthew and Luke, the other Evangelists are not drawing from him, but all alike are drawing from the original source, which in this particular case Mark has followed less closely than the others have.

Let us now, to begin with, test the theory by a case which is not by any means a simple one, but which perhaps can be made plain : we shall go into it at some length, because it is a very good example of the more intricate phases of the relation between the Gospels, and it shows clearly that there is a relationship there, if only we can get at it. If any one will examine the narrative Mark 9 : 33-50, and compare with it the parallel accounts in Matthew and Luke,<sup>1</sup> he will see that they present a somewhat complex problem. The sayings of which the passage is composed are very miscellaneous, and apparently they are put together in rather an arbitrary manner. The parallel passages, moreover, differ very essentially among themselves, and, on top of all, there is hardly a sentence in them which does not occur elsewhere in the Gospels in a different connection. Taking Mark by itself, indeed, there is no great difficulty. Mark, as we shall see, is rather fond of combining a few sayings in a connection of his own. He has, we may suppose, two incidents to give, Jesus' rebuke to the ambition of the disciples, and the account of the man who cast out demons in Jesus' name. Just what Jesus had said on these occasions he does not know, but he selects a few sayings from among the logia which seem to him to be appropriate, and these he weaves into his account, as he does in many other cases. And Luke accordingly, when he has followed Mark in giving the bare incidents, stops, for all that follows, the sayings about offences, and about the sacrifice of an offending member, he has met with in his other source, and he knows what their true connection is. But in Matthew the process is more complicated.

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<sup>1</sup> Matt. 18 : 1-35 ; Luke 9 : 46-50.



He starts in, indeed, with the incident which Mark gives, but he modifies it a little. Apparently he thinks that the reply which Mark attributes to Jesus is not quite pointed enough, which indeed it is not, and so he introduces a saying which really is more appropriate, though it belongs to another narrative, where Jesus blesses the little children.<sup>1</sup> Then he omits the second incident which Mark gives, perhaps because he has already made use of one verse of it,<sup>2</sup> and takes Mark up again at the forty-second verse, "Whoso shall cause one of these little ones which believe on me to stumble, it is profitable for him that a great millstone should be hanged about his neck, and that he should be sunk in the depth of the sea."

But now Matthew introduces a verse which Mark does not have: "Woe unto the world because of occasions of stumbling! for it must needs be that the occasions come; but woe to that man through whom the occasion cometh!" And if we turn to Luke, we shall see why he did this. For Luke also has the same two verses together at the beginning of a discourse,<sup>3</sup> so that they must have been together in the source; and Matthew, finding one of them in Mark, turns to the source and quotes the other. But then he turns back to Mark again, to the sayings about offending members, and this time he gets through with Mark for good. But he adds two other sayings, because, like what has gone before, they have to do with children, one a saying peculiar to himself, and the other a parable which he takes from the source. This parable indeed did not

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<sup>1</sup> Mark 10: 15.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. 10: 42, *cf.* Mk. 9: 41.

<sup>3</sup> Luke 17: 1 *ff.*

originally refer to children, but the Evangelist makes it do so by an application of his own.

And now there follows another series of sayings, commencing with certain rules of Church discipline, and again we understand why this is introduced if we turn to Luke. For we have seen that the Evangelist has already quoted two verses which stood at the head of one of the discourses in the source, and this discourse, according to Luke, goes on as follows: "Take heed to yourselves: if thy brother sin, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him. And if he sin against thee seven times in the day, and seven times turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him." Now here is the same idea that we have in Matthew, and it is likely that the account in Matthew is only a development of this. For these words of Matthew are not probable in the mouth of Jesus; they do not have the right ring to them; they point to a period when the Church and Church government were in existence; they have all the appearance of ecclesiastical rules. The Evangelist gives them as a definite application of Jesus' words; and then, led by the idea of Church authority, he adds a sentence which really was spoken to Peter, "Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." But although the first Evangelist does not retain the original form of the saying about forgiveness, he does retain something which points to it. For just below he tells us how Peter came to Jesus and asked him, "Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him? till seven times?" So that from Matthew and Luke together we can reconstruct the whole incident. Jesus had said, If thy brother sin against thee seven times in



a day, and seven times repent, thou shalt forgive him. A little while after Peter comes to him and asks, Lord, did you mean that we only need forgive seven times?

After that saying, "If he trespass against thee seven times in a day, thou shalt forgive him," when we try further to reconstruct the passage in the source, for a moment we are at a loss. For Luke goes on, "And the Apostles said unto the Lord, Increase our faith. And the Lord said, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye would say unto this sycamine tree, Be thou rooted up, and be thou planted in the sea; and it would have obeyed you." Of this, however, Matthew has nothing. Instead he goes on without any break, "Again I say unto you, that if two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." Then comes Peter's question, and Jesus' answer in the parable of the debtors. But here Mark comes in to help us; that saying about the sycamine tree he has used, with its form slightly changed, in the account of the barren fig-tree, and after it he has added two verses. "Therefore I say unto you, All things whatsoever ye pray and ask for, believe that ye have received them, and ye shall have them. And whensoever ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have aught against any one; that your Father which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses."<sup>1</sup> But these are exactly the two ideas, given partly in the same words, that we find in Matthew, the potency of prayer, and the duty of forgiveness. Mark has evidently abbreviated the passage

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<sup>1</sup> Mk. II : 23-25.

from the source, and it is very significant that he gives us just the three thoughts, in the same order, which we should get independently by combining the accounts in Luke and Matthew. And even the parable with which Luke closes,<sup>1</sup> a parable which he must have got from some other source, shows enough likeness to the parable of the debtors to explain how Luke thought of putting it here.

Now this passage shows, we think, in a concrete way, every process which we have assumed ; it shows that Matthew and Luke have made use of Mark, and it shows that all of our Gospels alike have made use of a common source, which still can be detected at the bottom of them. And when now we go further, and ask how extensive a use Mark, our earliest Gospel, has made of this source, we think that we shall be able to reach results that are a little surprising. First there are the sayings of Jesus which Mark has, and which he must have got in this way. He often puts these sayings, indeed, in new combinations, but with a very few exceptions, which perhaps he got from oral tradition, every one of them can be traced back to a probable, oftentimes to a certain connection in the source.<sup>2</sup> And the same thing is true of a surprisingly large number of the narratives. Matthew and Luke both show that they are dependent on Mark, but there are also indications, not so numerous, indeed, but still to be detected, that Mark also is secondary, that Matthew and Luke sometimes have retained the original reading. In the account of John the Baptist and of Jesus' temptation this is very plain ; let us look at some of the cases

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<sup>1</sup> Luke 17 : 7 ff.

<sup>2</sup> See Appendix.

where it is not so evident. To begin with, there are four miracle stories which are given by Matthew in a very much simpler form than that in which Mark gives them, the miracles of the palsied man,<sup>1</sup> the Gadarene,<sup>2</sup> Jarius' daughter,<sup>3</sup> and the epileptic boy.<sup>4</sup> In Matthew these stories do not bear the marks of having been abridged, and indeed the very fact that they are so much shorter and simpler would show that they are more original. Tradition does not proceed from the elaborate to the simple, but from the simple to what is more elaborate. Nor are special indications lacking of the secondary character of Mark's additions. In the story of the paralytic, the faith which in the earlier account Jesus commends consists in the fact that the sick man was brought, bed and all. The change which Mark introduces, and the whole incident of the opening in the roof, has always excited suspicion, and it becomes doubly suspicious when we notice that the incident is closely connected with Mark's pragmatism. Mark is constantly insisting upon the crowds which followed Jesus, and this appears to be the motive for his change; not so much to give a picture of faith as to show Jesus with so many hearers about him that approach to him is impossible. Again, in the story of the Gadarene, Mark appears at a disadvantage; for it is less likely that a writer who had a good explanation before him should change it into a poor one, than that, finding in his narrative that two demons were made to destroy a whole herd, and not understanding how this could be, he should conjecture that a legion

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<sup>1</sup> Mk. 2 : 1 ff. ; Matt. 9 : 1 ff.

<sup>2</sup> Mk. 5 : 1 ff. ; Matt. 8 : 28 ff.

<sup>3</sup> Mk. 5 : 21 ff. ; Matt. 9 : 18 ff.

<sup>4</sup> Mk. 9 : 14 ff. ; Matt. 17 : 14 ff.

of demons had entered into a single man, one for each of the swine. And another secondary trait appears in the healing of the issue of blood, where Mark retains the words which effect the cure just as they stand in Matthew, but at the same time makes the cure to have taken place before the words are spoken. And that the stories really were in the source, and that Mark found them there, is further shown by the fact that in all of them Luke has points of contact with Matthew's narrative, while in one of them, the cure of the epileptic boy, he clearly agrees throughout with Matthew rather than with Mark.

Next let us take the two Sabbath controversies, and first the story of the plucking of grain on the Sabbath day. Here also Matthew and Luke agree in opposition to Mark. Not to speak of several minor points of contact in the language, both omit the saying which Mark gives, "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath," and both disagree with Mark as to the cause of the controversy. "The disciples were an hungred," says Matthew, "and began to pluck the ears of corn and to eat"; and Luke has the same idea of it. But Mark says nothing about their eating, and makes the offence consist in breaking a path through the fields, though the illustration which Jesus uses, if nothing else, would make it evident that the other version is in the right. The story of the withered hand, again, seems to have had a curious history. The story, substantially as Matthew gives it, is shown to have been in the source by its presence in Luke,<sup>1</sup> with only its setting changed, and the withered hand altered to dropsy. Mark's narrative then can hardly

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<sup>1</sup> Luke 14 : 1 ff.

be anything else than his version of the same story, for the entire framework of the incident, apart from Jesus' words, is identical in the two Evangelists. Mark, probably because he is more interested in the illustration which it affords of the Pharisees' hostility than in anything else, drops Jesus' reply, and instead of the Pharisees' question, he makes Jesus ask a question which is somewhat similar to it in phraseology. When Matthew comes to this story in Mark, he recognizes it, and substitutes the account in the source. Luke, however, thinks they are two events, and gives both. Only the withered hand has got changed into the dropsy—lack of moisture vs. excess of it;—and while the question is given as in the source, "Is it permitted to heal on the Sabbath?" it is attributed through the influence of Mark's account to Jesus, instead of to his opponents.

Next comes the story of the miraculous feeding, and this too Mark appears to have found in his source. Not only are there a number of points in the language where Matthew and Luke agree,<sup>1</sup> but this seems to be the easiest way of accounting for the fact that two versions are given of the same event. If Mark had found one account in writing, and from some other source had got the story in a slightly different form, he might have thought that they referred to two distinct events; otherwise there is no good reason why he should have thought this. In the story of the transfiguration, too, Mark's account seems to be secondary, and in several minute ways Luke shows an agreement with Matthew. In both *while Peter is yet speaking* a cloud overshadows them, and a voice comes

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<sup>1</sup> See Appendix.



from the cloud ; in Luke it is the cloud, in Matthew, more naturally, the voice, which excites the alarm of the disciples. But both differ from Mark, who thinks that the fear is excited by the vision of the two men, and who makes Peter's words the result of this fear, a thing which, apart from the agreement of Matthew and Luke, appears like a misapprehension ; for in the words themselves there is nothing to suggest that they are the result of fright, and on the contrary, Peter's expression, "Lord, it 's a good thing that we are here," is quite in line with his assertive and self-confident character. And in addition, the statement which all the Evangelists have, "Looking round about, they saw no one, save Jesus only," comes in more naturally in Matthew, where the disciples in their fear have thrown themselves with their faces to the ground, and so for the moment have not been looking.

And now, after all this, we should not expect the concluding history of the Passion to be wholly independent, and, in fact, we find indications that it is not so, indications which in themselves are perhaps not always very strong, but which are stronger when they are taken all together. These begin with the story of the entry into Jerusalem, where Matthew and Luke both have a saying of Jesus' in answer to a complaint on the part of the Pharisees.<sup>1</sup> These sayings are not the same, but they are similar, and it is more likely that the presence of one of them should have suggested the other, than that, with nothing to suggest it, both Evangelists, having so little original knowledge as they seem to have, should have brought in a similar

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<sup>1</sup> Matt. 21 : 16 ; Luke 19 : 40.



saying in the same narrative. Besides this, both accounts make the cleansing of the Temple take place on the day of the entry, while Mark postpones it to the following day; and the account of the answer which Jesus gave to his opponents when they asked him his authority,<sup>1</sup> an account in which there are several points of contact between Matthew and Luke, has a close connection with this cleansing.

Another indication occurs in the story of the preparations for the last supper. While Mark tells minutely how Jesus gave directions to his disciples to go into the city till they should meet a man bearing a pitcher of water, and then to follow him and address the owner of the house where he should enter—plainly the account of a miracle,—Matthew simply reads, “Go into the city to such a man,” which seems to be original, for the first Evangelist never abbreviates a longer account in a way like this, particularly if by doing so he lets go the chance to relate a miracle. Then, in the story of Gethsemane, Matthew and Luke both have the form, “Thy will be done,” while Mark only has “Not what I will, but what thou wilt”; this might, however, be due to a reminiscence of the Lord’s Prayer. But in the account of the denial the coincidences are stronger. In both Matthew and Luke the prophecy reads, “Before the cock crow,” while Mark has “Before the cock crow twice.” Both add the sentence, “And Peter went out and wept bitterly.” Again, in Mark Peter is questioned the second time by the maid who spoke to him at first, while in Luke it is another man; so that the “other maid,” whom the first Evangelist speaks of, may possibly be a compromise between

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<sup>1</sup> Matt. 21 : 23.

the two. Then, according to Mark, Jesus says to his judges, "Ye shall see the Son of man sitting at the right hand of power, and coming with the clouds of heaven." Such a saying is a little suspicious, particularly as Jesus hardly could sit at the right hand of power, and come with the clouds of heaven at the same time, which seems to be intended. Matthew, again, has it, "Henceforth ye shall see the Son of man sitting at the right hand of power, and coming on the clouds of heaven," which does not make good sense. But in Luke we find, "But from henceforth shall the Son of man be seated at the right hand of the power of God." If this was the form in the source, which Luke has been the only one to retain, it explains at once how Mark's misunderstanding arose, and how the first Evangelist got his "henceforth," which otherwise cannot very well be explained. In the closely connected account of the mocking of Jesus, also, Matthew and Luke both have the question, "Who is he that smote thee?" And, in conclusion, there are a number of other verbal coincidences between Matthew and Luke.<sup>1</sup>

And not only has Mark taken all his most important incidents from the source, but even in the narratives which are due to himself he shows his dependence on the source in a remarkable way. To take for the present only the most striking example of this, in Matthew

<sup>1</sup> ἡνάλιζέτο, Luke 21:37, cf. Matt. 21:17; ἐπέταξεν, Luke 22:50, cf. Matt. 26:51; omission of Mk. 14:51 and 15:44; καὶ ἰστῆκει ὁ λαὸς θεωρῶν and τοῦ θεοῦ, Luke 23:35, cf. Matt. 27:36, 40; ἐνετύλιξεν, Luke 23:53, cf. Matt. 27:59; οὐ οὐκ ἦν οὐδεὶς οὐπω κείμενος, Luke 23:53, cf. Matt. 27:60; ἐπέφωσκεν, Luke 23:54, cf. Matt. 28:1; ἀστραπτούσῃ, Luke 24:4, cf. Matt. 28:3.

there is connected with the Sermon on the Mount a short introduction and conclusion, nearly every sentence of which has its counterpart in Mark.

And Jesus went about in all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the Gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of disease and all manner of sickness among the people.

And the report of him went forth into all Syria :

and they brought unto him all that were sick, holden with divers diseases, and torments, possessed with demons, and epileptic and palsied ; and he healed them.

And there followed him great multitudes from Galilee, and Decapolis, and Jerusalem and Judæa, and from beyond Jordan.

And seeing the multitudes, he went up into the moun-

Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the Gospel of God. Mk. 1 : 14, 15.

And straightway on the Sabbath day he entered into the synagogue, and taught. 1 : 21.

And he went into their synagogues throughout all Galilee, preaching and casting out devils. 1 : 39.

And the report of him went out straightway everywhere into all the region of Galilee round about. 1 : 28.

They brought unto him all that were sick, and them that were possessed with demons, . . . and he healed many that were sick with divers diseases. 1 : 32-34.

He healed many, insomuch that as many as had plagues pressed upon him that they might touch him. 3 : 10.

And a great multitude from Galilee followed, and from Jerusalem, and from Idumæa and beyond Jordan, and about Tyre and Sidon. 3 : 7 f.

And he goeth up into the mountain, and calleth unto

tain : and when he had sat down, his disciples came unto him.

him whom he himself would, and they went unto him. 3 : 13.

And it came to pass when Jesus ended these words, the multitudes were astonished at his teaching : for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes. Matt. 4 : 23-5 ; 1 : 7 : 28, 29.

And they were astonished at his teaching, for he taught them as having authority, and not as the scribes. 1 : 22.

It is evident from this comparison that there is a direct literary connection between this passage and Mark's Gospel, and there are two ways in which the connection might have arisen. Our first Evangelist, wishing to form an introduction to his account, may have gone through Mark, and have picked out these passages and put them together ; or, on the other hand, Mark may have found the passage in his source, and may have used it in a certain way as a basis for his representation. Something is to be said for the first view, but much more, we think, for the second. Let us take some of the sentences by themselves. "The report of him went abroad into all the region round about" ; this certainly would follow from Matthew's account, but in Mark not only is the single modest miracle not so likely to have attained this fame, but the sentence does not come in naturally. After it we should expect the narrative to stop, but instead of this it goes on to describe the other events of the same day ; in other words, the saying interrupts a continuous narrative to speak of something that only occurred after the events of this narrative were finished. Then the description of Jesus' teaching, "He taught them as having authority, and not as the scribes," is peculiarly appro-

priate after the Sermon on the Mount, from which one gets just this impression very vividly ; while in a simple statement that Jesus taught in the synagogue, there is nothing especially to suggest it. And closely connected with this, "The multitudes were astonished at his teaching," goes the statement of the crowds which followed Jesus ; in Mark, however, this statement is connected with the choice of the Apostles, where the crowds are rather in the way, and where we are not told just how they were disposed of while Jesus was upon the mountain. Again, in Mark the description of Jesus' choice of the Apostles is not quite natural, "He goeth into the mountain, and calleth unto him whom he himself would, and they went unto him." Whom did he send after them ? Why did he not bring them with him ? In Matthew, however, the words read much more naturally. And with this conclusion there are other things that agree. Luke also opens his account of Jesus' ministry with a short passage, which is an abridgment of the passage in Matthew,<sup>1</sup> and he therefore must have found this in his source ; for that both Evangelists should have made the same combination of passages from Mark, and that Luke should have done this when he goes on to repeat the passages again in the connection in which Mark gives them, and when an introduction was ready to his hand from Mark, is decidedly improbable. Luke, again, when he comes to the account in Mark of the choosing of the Twelve, takes that occasion to bring in the Sermon on the Mount. More than that, he changes the order in Mark, and, contrary to Mark, he gives the names of the Apostles first, and then brings

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<sup>1</sup> Luke 4 : 14, 15

in the description of Jesus' cures as an introduction to the Sermon. Some such introduction he must therefore have known in the source from which the Sermon was derived. And finally, Mark shows that other things at least he has borrowed to make up his narrative. The words by which Jesus is made to announce his ministry are those which John the Baptist uses, and the words of the demoniac, "What have *we* to do with thee?" are also found in the account which the source gives of *two* demoniacs.<sup>1</sup> Where they are the most likely to be original is evident.

This therefore is the conclusion to which we have come, that back of all our Gospels there lies a single common source, which still can be restored within certain limits by comparing carefully passages in our Gospels which are parallel. The author of Mark, the first of our present Gospels, had this before him, and used it as a mine from which to draw the material which he needed for his purpose. After him came the other two Evangelists, who, with two books now in their possession, attempted, each in his own way and with his own end in view, to combine them into a single narrative, adding besides a certain amount of other matter. But what bearing does this have upon the authorship of the books? The earliest tradition which we have about the authors is due to Papias, who gives it in these words:

Mark, having become the interpreter of Peter, wrote down accurately whatsoever he remembered. It was not, however, in exact order that he related the sayings or deeds of Christ. For he neither heard the Lord nor accompanied him. But afterwards, as I said, he accompanied Peter, who accommodated his

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<sup>1</sup> Matt. 8: 29.



instructions to the necessities of his hearers, but with no intention of giving a regular narrative of the Lord's sayings. Wherefore Mark made no mistake in thus writing some things as he remembered them. For of one thing he took especial care, not to omit anything he had heard, and not to put anything fictitious into the statements. Matthew put together the sayings of the Lord in the Hebrew language, and each one interpreted them as best he could.

Must we then give this early source which has been discovered to Matthew the Apostle? Granting that the tradition has some basis to it, this nevertheless can scarcely be insisted on, when we call to mind how our Gospels arose. The preceding analysis points to a somewhat informal and haphazard origin of the Gospel tradition, a gradual accretion about an original nucleus, each new editor or author adding a little something that was new, and leaving a more or less deep impress of his own peculiarities on the whole. We have Luke's testimony that Gospel writing was not considered the peculiar prerogative of an eye-witness, but that "many" before his time had tried their hand at it. Under these circumstances it would be extremely hazardous to assign the Gospels in their final stage of development to any special person designated by tradition. When we have got back as far as our data will permit, we scarcely have arrived at the Apostle Matthew, though some such a document as is attributed to Matthew must lie at the foundation of it all, if we are to account for the surprising accuracy with which many of the sayings of Jesus are preserved. But while, if Papias' statement is reliable, Matthew's work was a collection of sayings, or logia, the source which our Gospels used contained a very considerable amount of historical matter as well, and this, as will be shown,

is not always reliable enough to be the work of an Apostle. Indeed we sometimes can see traces of more hands than one. In two discourses of a less authentic character, earlier discourses have been made use of<sup>1</sup>; and the Sermon on the Mount, which, as its contents show, was spoken only to disciples, the writer of the introduction to it has understood as if it were spoken to the multitudes. Still more unsafe is it to attribute the second Gospel to the companion of Peter. Papias' Mark gets his material from Peter, and writes without much reference to order; our Mark derives by all odds the most important part of his matter from written sources, and his peculiarity lies just here, that he seems to have been one of the first attempts to give a real history, a systematic narrative, of Jesus' life. This is indeed the motive for his book; the facts which he has found strung loosely together he has combined to form a definite picture. For this picture he certainly deserves some credit; but also, in carrying it out, he continually is showing his lack of accurate knowledge, as will appear more in detail in a succeeding chapter. This of course leaves open the question of Papias' testimony. If that was not based upon an erroneous tradition, then either the Gospel of Mark must have disappeared, or else it must already have been incorporated with Matthew's work before our present Gospels arose.

<sup>1</sup> Matt. 10 : 15 ; Mk. 13 : 11.





## CHAPTER II.

### THE FOURTH GOSPEL.

DR. ABBOT, not long ago, is reported to have said, though we do not ourselves recall the passage, that the question of the Fourth Gospel and its authorship is a question which has been settled these forty years; and in saying this, Dr. Abbot is only voicing a sentiment which is very widespread indeed among religious people both in our own country and in England. One has only to read the religious newspapers to find that this is so, and to see in how confident a fashion the verdict is given, as if the whole thing had been disposed of once for all. Still the newspapers may perhaps be pardoned if they are not too accurate at times in matters of this sort, and we could listen to them with fairly good composure; but when just the same claim is made repeatedly by men who really are leaders in Christian thought, and who are deserving of admiration and respect, we feel that we have the right to complain. If when a writer uses such words as those of Dr. Abbot's which have been quoted, he means nothing more by them than that the arguments for the genuineness of the Gospel are so strong that he himself has been convinced by them, then certainly no one ever would dream of denying his right to say this as

strongly as he pleased. But to say that, as a question among scholars, the genuineness of the Fourth Gospel is a settled question, is a very different thing indeed, and it never would be said by one who had taken impartial account of the literature on both sides of the subject. It would not be fair to claim, on the other hand, that the spuriousness of the Gospel is a settled question, though we think that there has been a tendency in this direction, of which the change of opinion on the part of certain German critics is one significant indication. But what makes us disposed to complain of such a claim as that which Dr. Abbot makes, is not so much the fact that it is a mistaken claim, as for this reason, that it tends to increase a feeling about the Fourth Gospel which is a most unfortunate one, and because in itself it usually is an expression of this feeling. Of the Fourth Gospel it is true in a peculiar way, as it is not true of any other book of the Bible, that it has become a test question in theology rather than a question which is purely critical and historical. If one is concerned for religion, and wishes to commend himself to religious people, it is almost impossible that he should do this if he gives it out that he does not accept the Fourth Gospel as the work of an Apostle, while if one does accept it firmly, this is enough, as has been shown more than once in recent days, to cover a multitude of theological sins. This, we say, is unfortunate, and the more important the question that is concerned in it, the more unfortunate it is. That a critic does not accept the Fourth Gospel as genuine is to most people plain proof that he simply will not accept it, that he has decided beforehand that the Gospel cannot be genuine, and now is only concerned to find arguments that will support his

decision ; so that when the question continues to be raised, it is not strange if it is met by a certain feeling of impatience, as if a stubborn blindness were the only thing that inspired the attempt. And with this opinion of an opponent, it is hardly possible that one should try very seriously to imagine to himself that opponent's point of view. At the same time we do not deny that this is a natural feeling ; on the contrary it is wellnigh an inevitable one, and it would be most surprising if such a feeling did not exist. For the Fourth Gospel does really lie at the centre of the Bible, and more than any other book of the Bible it will determine what the truth of the Bible history really is. If the Fourth Gospel is not genuine, then the supernatural conception of Jesus which the Gospel upholds inevitably will have to fall away with it ; and if, on the other hand, the Gospel can be shown to be the work of the Apostle John, then the Apologists are right when they claim that really it carries the proof of the miraculous with it.

But in saying this, we wish to guard ourselves against a retort which very likely will occur to any who are inclined to be critical. For, they will say, such a statement only goes to indicate, what we have all along maintained, that at bottom it is an aversion to the miraculous which underlies all the opposition to the Fourth Gospel ; it is the perception that the Gospel implies the miraculous which furnishes the sufficient proof that it cannot be genuine. That we should convince any one that it is not a fear of the miracles which, in spite of the real difficulties of the subject, has brought us to the conclusion which we have reached, we have, we confess, but little hope. Still this is the less important as the critic who rejects the Gospel is not the



only one who comes with his prepossessions to the inquiry. Prof. Sanday, who is as fair an opponent as one could wish to meet, said not very long ago, if we recall him rightly, that while the Old Testament problems are not of such a nature that the basis of our faith depends upon the way in which they may be settled, the problem of the Fourth Gospel differs from them in this. But one who has a system of religious belief which he wishes to retain, and which depends upon the question whether a book was written by a certain man, surely will not come to that book without his prepossessions about it, nor are we able to see how he is likely to be a more impartial critic than the man who takes offence at the miracle stories. But if our objection to the Gospel is based upon the miraculous, we at least are not aware of it. When we came to the book, we determined as much as possible to set aside the miraculous elements, and to decide the question, if it were possible to decide it, wholly upon other grounds ; and at first, indeed, we were strongly inclined to accept the Gospel as genuine. But there were other things also which we found, and these at last compelled us to do what we had much rather not have done, to believe that the Fourth Gospel is in no sense the work of the Apostle John ; and the reasons for this change we shall now give.

When we pass from the first three Gospels to the Fourth, we find at once that there are very many and very obvious differences which have to be accounted for. We meet with new persons and new scenes, and indeed the whole framework of the history is changed completely ; and even in those narratives which are found in the older Gospels, there are often divergencies, some of them slight divergencies, but others very important ones. Now in itself, it must be noticed, the



fact that such a conflict exists does not prove at all that the Fourth Gospel is wrong, and it might even tell in its favor. To one who knows how the early Gospels arose, it will not appear strange that an eye-witness should find many things to correct in them; and, in fact, whoever did not find things to correct we should say at once could not have been an eye-witness. So that when John contradicts the Synoptists, we cannot, to start with, assume that John is wrong, but in each case we must ask ourselves which account in itself is most likely to be right; we must ask whether the changes which we find are the changes which an Apostle, an eye-witness, would have been likely to make, or whether there is some other way in which they can be more easily explained.

Let us begin with a case which, however it may be decided at last, is in its main features fairly plain, the healing of the nobleman's son, in the fourth chapter of the Gospel. It is possible that this narrative, and the narrative of the centurion's child in the older Gospels, may refer to two distinct events. It is possible; but when we notice the very striking resemblances between the two stories, it is hard to get rid of the suspicion that it must be the same event that both relate. Both occur at the beginning of the ministry in Galilee, in both the one who asks for help is a man of importance, in both his home is at Capernaum, in both a sick child is cured, in both the boy is healed at a distance, in both a rebuke to the Jews is implied. So that, while we admit the possibility, we do not think it is the most natural thing, to suppose that two events are meant. But if it is to the same healing that both refer, then it is evident that there are features which cannot be reconciled with each other, and

in the case of the most important difference, it is quite as evident that, if we must choose between the two, the earlier account has all the marks of being the more original one. If we turn to this account, we shall find that the whole story centres about a remarkable saying of the centurion's, a saying which excited the admiration of Jesus. But this saying John does not give, and, more than that, he directly excludes it. According to the older account, Jesus had not thought of working a cure at a distance, and it is the faith of the centurion which suggests this, a faith which Jesus contrasts with the unbelief of his own countrymen. But in John all this is changed; here the nobleman himself is included in the rebuke, Jesus of his own accord performs the cure at a distance, and the nobleman, far from suggesting it, only entreats Jesus to "come down ere his child dies." Here, we say, if either account is right, it is far more likely to be the older one; and the only question is, How are we to explain the difference in John's narrative? If the narrative is really John's, if it is the narrative of an eye-witness, then the only way in which it can be explained is to suppose that there has been a confusion of memory; and perhaps it would not be safe to say that this is impossible to suppose. But the supposition becomes a somewhat dangerous one when we remember that it is not a detail of no importance which John has forgotten, but the very point of the whole story. If John is confused here, and still gives his confused recollections so circumstantially, is it not likely to lessen a little one's confidence in his accuracy? And even if it is possible that John could have forgotten such a striking thing, yet it must have been recalled to him if he had ever read our Synoptic Gos-

pels, as it seems exceedingly probable that he had done. Now there is another way in which the differences might be accounted for, and this way gets rid of the difficulty which is found in supposing that there has been a slip of memory. The aim of the Fourth Gospel is to glorify Jesus ; this much at least is certain, whatever the means may be that are taken to do it. If now we suppose that the author has taken the miracle which he found in the older Gospels, and, with this purpose in his mind, has transformed it freely to suit himself, we have a supposition which, taking the passage alone, will explain the facts at least in a plausible way. This will account for the difference which already has been dwelt upon. In its early form the miracle is not a glorification of Jesus so much as it is a glorification of the centurion, and if one wished to exalt Jesus' share in it, he would be likely to do much as we find in the Fourth Gospel has actually been done ; he would make Jesus the one to propose the distant cure, he would exalt Jesus' majesty and self-confidence, and tone down the centurion's faith, he would make it seem natural and customary that Jesus should command in this way the powers of sickness, instead of its being necessary for the sick man to be in his presence, as, in the vast majority of cases, the older Gospels presuppose. And the other features of the story fit in curiously with this explanation. There is, for instance, the place at which the miracle happened, at Cana, according to John, while the other Gospels put it at Capernaum. It might be that the old account was corrected by John, but it is not quite easy to see why such a detail as this should have dropped out, while it is very easy to see how, if one wished to heighten the account, the miracle might seem a little

more effective if the distance were increased. Just the same thing is true of the conclusion which is given to the account. This conclusion is not found in the older Gospels, but Matthew's narrative closes with these words, "And the child was healed in that hour." Now if the writer had been working over the miracle upon the basis of the old account, what is it likely that he would have done? Why he would have done as we find has really been done in the Fourth Gospel, he would have shown how these words were literally true, how the very moment when Jesus spoke was the moment of the child's recovery. And that this is the true explanation, that the addition is not history at all, at least one thing goes to show, the well-known difficulty about the time when the cure was performed. According to John this was about one o'clock in the afternoon, and yet, although the servants started out to meet the nobleman, and the journey was a short one, it was not till the next day that he learned the news. No explanation has been given of this which is enough to make it seem natural, and we do not think that any explanation can be given; but if we account for the narrative in the way in which we have tried to account for it, then no explanation will be necessary.

Now we will not insist that this way of accounting for the narrative is fixed and certain, that it is necessarily the true way. If the difficulty stood alone in the Gospel, if there were nothing more which pointed to this explanation, then we should say that undoubtedly it was not the true way, and that some other way must be found. All that we claim is that it is a plausible way, that taken by itself it is even the most plausible way of accounting for the facts. But if we find that there are other incidents in the Gospel which can be

accounted for in the same way, that there are many such incidents, then the explanation becomes more than a possibility, it becomes distinctly probable. Now there are other things in the Gospel which, if they do not necessarily demand this explanation, at least fall in with it very readily, and as another illustration we may take the very next miracle that is recorded, the miracle of the man at the pool of Bethesda. Upon the difficulties in the miracle itself we do not wish to dwell, although there are some features of it which are a little suspicious. This long and unsuccessful waiting at a pool with miraculous properties is not altogether easy to imagine, and there is the more important fact that Jesus volunteers of his own accord to heal the man, while in the other Gospels he is accustomed to wait till he is asked. But what we want especially to point out is the fact that here too, as in the former miracle, there are remarkable points of contact with a narrative in the Synoptic Gospels, the narrative of the paralytic borne of four. Here the helplessness of the man and the character of his sickness is the same, the command of Jesus and the result which followed it are given in just the same words, in both Jesus assumes that the man's sickness is due to sin, and both give rise to an accusation of blasphemy on the part of the Pharisees. Moreover the narrative in Matthew is closely connected in order with the story of the centurion's child, which also precedes it in John. Now to understand what the force of our argument is, it is necessary, not to take this miracle alone, but to look at it in connection with the miracle of the nobleman's son which already has been considered. Here are two narratives which agree in a most remarkable way with two corresponding narratives in the older Gospels. Is this agreement



an accidental one? does it stand for nothing? To us it is not possible to believe this; not easy to believe it in the case of the first miracle, and impossible when we put the two together. And the explanation which in the first miracle we thought perhaps was conceivable, the explanation that there had been a fault of memory, becomes in the second not conceivable at all. So that again we are led to conclude, as we were disposed to conclude before, that the author is not an eye-witness, but a man who is freely using and changing over stories which he found already before him in writing.

One other narrative it may be well to take before going through the Gospel more in detail, the one which tells of the anointing of Jesus at Bethany. This story is told in John more circumstantially than it is told in the Synoptic Gospels; Mary, for example, is the woman who anoints Jesus, and Judas is the disciple who objects to the waste of the ointment. Now this may go to show that John has a better knowledge of the event than the older narrators, but it is just as possible that it shows something very different. Tradition often tends to give definiteness to a story, to discover names and add details, and tradition it is quite possible has been at work here. Indeed it is rather easier to explain how unknown persons should be identified with names that were familiar, than to explain how, if the one who anointed Jesus was a well-known follower of his, and the objecting disciple was the disciple who, a few days later, proved a traitor, facts like these should come to be lost sight of in the earlier account. Then when John makes the ointment a full pound in weight the amount certainly is extravagant, and the words of Jesus by which he commends the woman are much



more pointed in the older story. But the difference which is most significant consists in this, that while in the Synoptic Gospels the head of Jesus is anointed, John makes Mary anoint his feet, and wipe them with the hair of her head. Here again we cannot say absolutely that the Fourth Gospel is wrong. Perhaps it is right. Still the probability seems to be very much against it. For if we turn to the seventh chapter of Luke, we find the account of another anointing which bears a curious resemblance to John's narrative. A woman, we are told, who was a sinner, came and stood at Jesus' feet behind him, weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and to wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment. Now the evidence for this story is not unfortunately of the best, for it shows clearly a dependence upon other narratives. This is true of the incident of the anointment, which we think is taken from the anointing at Bethany, to which the name of the host, Simon, is also due. Then again the two sentences spoken to the woman are taken, the one from the miracle of the palsied man, and the other from the miracle of the woman with an issue of blood, and the forgiving of the woman's sins also recalls the story of the paralytic. Besides this, Jesus' application of his parable is a little confused, a sinful woman would hardly have been likely to enter a Pharisee's house, and Jesus' rebuke is harsh when we remember that he was enjoying the Pharisee's hospitality. At the same time the story is so beautiful and so characteristic that we should be glad to believe there was some basis for it, and perhaps the parable really was spoken by Jesus to defend some woman who had shown an unusual token of her gratitude. But

however this may be, the story in Luke offers an easy way of explaining how John's account arose. In Luke the woman bends over Jesus, weeping, and as some of her tears fall on his feet, she brushes them away with her hair; and this is not unnatural. But that Mary should have poured ointment on his feet, and wiped *that* away with her hair, is plainly not so natural, so that John's account seems to be a secondary one, and his confusion must have been due to Luke. But such a confusion in the case of an eye-witness is hardly possible, and it points rather to one who is drawing his facts from the Gospels, and has no original knowledge about them of his own.

This then is our theory, that in the history which he gives, our author is taking facts which he has found in the older Gospels, and is freely using these facts, and transforming them, sometimes, so that they shall suit the purpose which he has in view. Such a theory demands more proof than has been given for it as yet, and so we shall go through the book with some detail, and shall try to show that there are many things which seem to point to it. And first we will begin with the story of John the Baptist. This account, when we first look at it, seems to be very different from the older narrative. There is the deputation from the Sanhedrin, and John's testimony to this deputation, an incident in itself not at all improbable, although the Synoptists do not know of it. Then three times John bears witness to Jesus among his own disciples, and of this also the earlier Gospels know nothing. And what the earlier Gospels do speak of, the Baptism and the Temptation, in John are not so much as hinted at; whether he leaves a place for them at all is a somewhat doubtful question. And now

with differences such as these, it becomes a little strange that the elements of John's account, very nearly the whole of them, are found also in the Synoptists. John speaks of himself as a "voice of one crying in the wilderness," and this quotation, hardly natural in John's own mouth, the Evangelists we find have already applied to him. He bears witness before the Pharisees in a sentence which, in the older accounts, is addressed to the people, and this earlier connection we can hardly hesitate to say is the more correct one. Then again, in the Synoptic Gospels, a dove appears to Jesus when he is baptized, and a voice from heaven attests his Messiahship to him,—an experience clearly of Jesus' own. Now the Fourth Gospel has this incident, or at least a part of it, but here the experience does not come to Jesus but to John himself. If one feels no trouble in believing that the dove was a real appearance "in bodily form," of course it will not be hard for him to explain this; but if he finds this difficult to accept, any attempt to reconcile John's account with the other one brings in endless complications. Then in addition to these there is another point of contact which is a peculiarly significant one. "He that cometh after me," says John, "is become before me, for he was before me," and upon this testimony a good deal of emphasis is laid. But in the other Gospels there is a sentence which is suggested by this very strongly, "He that cometh after me is mightier than I, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose." No doubt it is possible to say that these are two different sayings, but it is not easy to believe that this is so, particularly when we find that the testimony is brought in as something already well-known, "this is he of whom I said," and that in

the twenty-seventh verse John practically makes the identification himself. But to suppose that an Apostle should have altered a saying in so arbitrary a way as this is very difficult to suppose indeed.

And this last alteration goes along with two other testimonies to Jesus which the Fourth Gospel attributes to the Baptist, one of them the saying, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world," and the other the long speech to the disciples in the third chapter. These three testimonies have all of them the same point of view; Jesus is pre-existent, he comes down from heaven, he is, in the theological language of the book, the divine Logos, sent into the world for the salvation of men. Now this certainly is the point of view of the Evangelist, it is exactly the fashion in which he speaks of Jesus in other places; but it is most improbable that a metaphysical belief like this was held by the Baptist. John's conception of the Messiah, if we can judge from his sayings in the Gospels, did not differ radically from the best conceptions of his day; to him the Messiah was a king, a conqueror, whose task it was to lay the axe to the root of the trees, to sift the chaff from the wheat, to execute vengeance upon God's enemies, and bring about the triumph of his people. And from a view like this to get the view of the Fourth Gospel, it is not, we think, historically possible to do, for the two sets of sayings show an altogether different type of mind. And closely connected with this, there is another point in which the two accounts cannot easily be made to agree. John, after his imprisonment, sent to Jesus with a question about his Messiahship, and this question makes it evident that there was a doubt upon the matter in John's mind. But while we can understand

how John, with a tendency to believe that Jesus was the Messiah, afterwards might be led by circumstances to be in doubt about it, we cannot understand this if John's belief was so clear and definite as the Fourth Gospel makes it out to be. If a divine token had been revealed to John, and he had clearly recognized this token in Jesus, if again and again he had borne witness to Jesus' Messiahship with perfect confidence, if his clearest and most unequivocal testimony had been given after Jesus for some time had been engaged in a ministry which did not in the least point to a visible and temporal kingdom, then John's doubt becomes very strange, and we do not think that it can be naturally explained. And still one thing more, if John spoke in this way, how is it that John's disciples still held aloof from Jesus, that "he to whom John bare witness beyond Jordan" is still to them their master's rival, a man to be jealous of, a man with whom John's death even does not bring them into fellowship? This too we find not easily answered.

There are these difficulties, then, in the account which the Fourth Gospel gives. We do not wish to be too positive, and we will grant to the defenders of the book that, not easily indeed, nor without violence, but still after some fashion they all of them may be accounted for. But also we wish to point out how simply, with how little forcing, they may be explained upon our theory. This strange baptism of the Son of God by a sinful man, this submission to the power of the devil in the wilderness, what could be more natural than to drop out such stories as really not to be explained, and in their place to show how clearly the forerunner had recognized his master? First to the Jews, then to the disciples,—naturally these testimonies would fall into a



series of three, a favorite number with the Evangelist. A dove, so tradition said, had appeared to Jesus ; then the Baptist too must have seen it, it must have been a sign to him, a sign that already had been foretold, a sign which he could not have kept his disciples ignorant of,—no reasoning could be simpler. Jesus must appear, too, that witness may be borne to him, a shadowy form, indeed, moving mysteriously by in the distance ; what doing ? whither going ? what need to ask if only he give the Baptist a chance to speak ! And then if the Baptist was a man sent from God, he must have recognized Jesus plainly, he must have recognized him, not as the Messiah only, but as the pre-existent Son of God ; and if the early Gospels did not tell of this, then the early Gospels could not have been complete.

After the testimony which the Baptist gives, there comes an account of the call of several of John's disciples, and here again the difference from the old account is noticeable. In the Synoptics, though here too there are difficulties to be met, Jesus gradually gathers the band of Apostles about him, for not all at once does he meet with the men whom he wants ; but in the Fourth Gospel they are ready to his hand, and six of them he has at the end of the second day. Which one of these accounts is in itself more likely to be the true one, the historical one, we can hardly doubt ; if one had wished to glorify Jesus, this is just the way he would have gone to work. To glorify Jesus,—that is what every detail seems fitted to do. Jesus does not test and judge men in a human way, but at a glance he knows what is in them. Peter is a rock, Nathanael is an Israelite without guile, and even definite facts in Nathanael's life Jesus knows miraculously ; when we come to see what this knowledge makes necessary, when we apply



it, as the Evangelist does, even to the case of Judas, and say that Jesus had chosen Judas, knowing that he would prove a traitor, then we see how absurd and impossible it becomes. And what also makes it hard to accept this account is the fact that already the older Evangelists have told how four of these disciples received a call from Jesus in a way that is altogether different. Of this calling in Galilee, by the Lake of Genneseret, John does not speak, and it is difficult to find a place in his account where the event is possible. Jesus, in the Fourth Gospel, goes to Cana, to Capernaum, to Judæa, where for seven months he baptizes, to Galilee again, and all this time his disciples are with him, as a fixed part of his household. Who are these disciples? naturally of course they are the disciples whom John already has mentioned. If now the other account is to be brought into the narrative of John, we must suppose that when Jesus came this second time into Galilee, after the disciples had been with him for many months, he disbanded them for a time, to collect them together again in the manner of which our Synoptic Gospels have given an account. But if John gave the least hint of this, which he does not, if such a cessation of Jesus' ministry were probable, if it could be explained how this first year dropped completely out of tradition, still the fact remains that the old account means to tell of a first call, and is not intelligible if we explain it in any other way; so that no real harmony between the two can be admitted.

For the moment we will pass by the miracle at Cana, which has nothing in the Synoptics to correspond with it, and will come to the cleansing of the Temple. And this event is so closely connected with another difference between the two traditions, the most striking difference

of all, that we shall take up the two together. If we had the Synoptic Gospels alone, we undoubtedly should suppose that Jesus' ministry lasted at the most a little over a year, and that, except for a few days at Jerusalem before his death, it was confined chiefly to Galilee. But the Fourth Gospel contradicts this decidedly ; it extends Jesus' public life to several years, and it gives to him a ministry, an extended one, in Judæa and in Jerusalem, as well as in Galilee. Now it would be very unsafe to rest much in the matter of chronology upon the authority of the early Gospels, for they seem to have had no chronological data worth speaking of to go on, and it only is the fact that they lump all the narratives together, which makes it appear that these were included in a single year. So far as the mere fact goes, then, it may very well be that John is nearer to the truth when he assigns a longer duration to Jesus' public life ; nor is it impossible that a ministry in Judæa should have been lost sight of by tradition. But when we consider the nature of the ministry which John tells of, then the matter begins to take on a different complexion. According to John, after a few days at Capernaum Jesus goes straight to Jerusalem, and for the next seven months, until December, he labors in Judæa. Then he goes back to Galilee, where, if John is right, he disbands his disciples for a season ; but very soon we find him again in Jerusalem, in all probability at the feast of Purim, in March. In April he again is in Galilee, and from this time we lose sight of him till October, when he comes to the feast of Tabernacles ; and in December he still is in Jerusalem. Till the next April again he is in hiding, when he appears to meet his fate. Jesus, then, passes as much of his time in Judæa as he passes

in Galilee, and indeed he passes rather more of his time there. If we had the Fourth Gospel alone, we even should suppose that the ministry in Galilee was an afterthought, that Jesus could not walk in Judæa because the Jews sought to kill him, and so went in to the northern province, that the Galileans received him because they saw his miracles in Jerusalem. All this time Jesus has very definite and bitter relations with the authorities in Jerusalem, and these relations affect closely the future of his life. Could tradition have forgotten all this? it seems rather difficult to believe. And when we examine it a little more closely, the difficulty becomes a greater one. The most of the events which the older Gospels tell us of, conservative critics such as Weiss have had to assign very definitely to a period that lies between two points, between the opening of the ministry in Galilee, and the feeding of the multitudes, if the history is to be at all intelligible. Here take place the rise, the progress, and the failure of the Galilean ministry, which the early accounts think of as the whole of Jesus' work. But if we are to fit this into John's chronology, we must assign it—the great mass, let us remember, of what is told us about Jesus' life,—to a period which is even shorter than the Synoptists allow for it, to the few months between the arrival in Galilee, in December, and the feeding of the multitudes, a little before the Passover in April; and even this period has to be shortened by the time it required to dismiss the disciples and call them together again, and we have to break into it by another journey to Jerusalem at the feast of Purim. It is true that we may get a longer period by making the feast of John 5:1 some other feast than Purim, but this is doing violence to the

natural interpretation. In a writer whose chronology we can follow elsewhere without any trouble, and who is particularly careful to mention the Passovers, it is unnatural to drop out a Passover feast and a whole year with it entirely without mention. When he mentions a Passover in the second chapter, and again another in the sixth, we must assume that the one follows on the other, unless there are strong reasons against supposing this. And here the only reason is this very difficulty which we are urging against the Gospel. But the rest of the time, how are we to fill that up? The seven months of the ministry in Judæa, of which not a hint has come down to us, although we certainly should expect that the impression which Jesus' first appearance made would not wholly have been lost; the long stretch from the feeding of the thousands to the feast of Tabernacles, from April to December; another long stretch from December to April, when Jesus actually was in hiding,—how are we to fill these clumsy stretches of time? And still more fatal is the confusion which this brings into Jesus' life-work. There is no clear-cut plan, but a strange vacillation, a leaving of one work to go to another, with success in neither of them, a six months' flight, a four months' hiding. But how easily this is all explained when we stop trying to harmonize our accounts. Jesus must testify to himself in the capital, he must be rejected by the rulers, it was at the feasts that he would appear, of course, to testify to himself he must have appeared more than once; and nothing was easier than to hit upon the threefold Passover scheme, when we come to see the meaning of the number three. It is true that the intervals between these feasts are very hazy and indistinct; in the most surprising way

we find that no sooner is one feast done than another is at hand, with only an "after these things" to show that any time has elapsed. At the feast of Tabernacles we enter upon what is apparently a continuous narration, and all at once we find ourselves in the feast of the Dedication, three months later. In March Jesus heals a sick man, and the next October he refers to it as if it had been yesterday. But why should the Evangelist trouble himself for this? He has brought Jesus to Jerusalem, and that is all he cares to do; the trouble he was to bring the commentators he hardly could have guessed.

And now to come back to the point where we began, the cleansing of the Temple, which John puts here, and which the Synoptists put at the very end, has appealed so differently to different persons, according to the point of view from which they start in, that it is hardly worth while putting much stress upon it. To us indeed the event seems more natural at the end of Jesus' ministry than at its beginning, because the Synoptic Gospels show that Jesus did not enter upon his work as a reformer, but that he tried to win men by gentleness and by his teaching; and they imply also that the opposition to him began in a very different way. However, we will not insist upon this, if others will be content not to argue from it to John's originality.

When we come to the next long narrative in the Fourth Gospel, the miraculous feeding and the walking on the sea, we find that John agrees closely with the older accounts, and so we need not stop here very long. Still there are changes to be noticed, and again these changes all tend to glorify Jesus. Jesus is the one to propose the miracle, he suggests it, not after the multi-



tudes in listening to his words have grown weary and hungry, but as soon as he sees them coming to him, he plays good-humoredly with the disciples' unbelief. To the walking on the sea, also, another stupendous miracle is added, and the boat is conveyed suddenly to the land ; nor do we think that the sudden appearance of boats enough to carry five thousand persons across the lake has everything in its favor. But the difficulty is more serious when, a little farther on, we come to Peter's confession. In the older account this is at Cæsarea Philippi ; here it seems to be at Capernaum. In the older account Peter is addressed as Satan ; here too Jesus calls one of his disciples "a devil," but it is Judas Iscariot, and not Peter. But there is a much more important change in the whole spirit of the incident. We need not attempt here to decide whether Peter's words were the first expression of the disciple's belief that Jesus was the Messiah, but this much the incident certainly was, a crisis in Jesus' ministry, when he had good reason to be doubtful what the answer to his question would be. But in John there is no trace of this crisis ; the disciples recognize Jesus fully in the beginning, their faith is increased by miracle after miracle, and now instead of a solemn avowal from Peter and a joyful outburst from Jesus, we only have, in a tone of grieved surprise, as if the answer were obvious enough, "Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life." Clearly, from the Evangelist's standpoint, the disciples' faith never could have wavered, but with this standpoint the verdict of history cannot agree.

It is at the close of the history, in the account of the Passion, that John's connection with the Synoptics is most extended, and this we shall now have to look at.



In their general outline the two agree very well, but still the differences are sufficiently marked. First there comes the famous difficulty about the day on which Jesus was crucified ; was it the first day of the feast, as the Synoptics imply, or the day before, the 14th of Nisan, as John tells us? We do not care to venture into the vast wilderness of learning which has grown up about this discussion, since we probably should not convince any one who does not care to be convinced. We are ready to admit that there are difficulties on both sides. That the arrest and trial of Jesus should have taken place upon a feast day is not what we should have expected, but at the same time the fact that Jesus ate the Passover on the night of his betrayal is hardly to be denied, and it is not possible to show that the Passover could be eaten at any other than the appointed time. But again we have to notice the suspicious readiness with which John's account can be explained. Naturally enough Christian teachers came early to see a type of Christ in the Paschal lamb, and to speak of "Christ our Passover who suffered for us" ; for all the circumstances of his death went to make this almost inevitable. Now the Fourth Evangelist most of all would be inclined to a view which gave a spiritual turn to the old ritual, and at the same time did away with it as something literally to be observed ; and with this thought once in his mind, it would not be hard for him to conclude that Jesus' death must have conformed much more exactly to the older type than the Synoptists made it out to do, that Jesus must really have been slain when the Paschal lamb was slain. And there are several indications which, possibly at least, point to this very thing. The Baptist, it will be remembered, points out Jesus expressly as the

Lamb of God. In a speech of Jesus' own, too, there is a metaphor which, carried out perhaps somewhat too crudely, indicates the same thing, the metaphor of Jesus' flesh and blood. Then the anointing of Jesus is placed by John, in opposition to the other Gospels, six days before the Passover, on the day when the Paschal lamb was selected. The account of the Passover meal is ignored by John, and the explanations that have been given for this, if they are possible explanations, are still not quite satisfactory ; but if Jesus was the Passover lamb himself, of course he could not have eaten the Passover, and the omission is explained at once. Then John places the sentence of Jesus at noon, which does not agree with the older Gospels, but which does agree with the time when preparations were begun for killing the Passover lamb. Last of all he brings in an incident which is quite unknown to the older Gospels, and by which he shows that the command which was given in regard to the Paschal lamb, that a bone of it should not be broken, was fulfilled in the case of Jesus.

Differences so decided as this will not be found in the rest of the account, but still the differences are numerous, and they are not the most of them easily to be justified. There are, for example, the plots of the Pharisees against Jesus, which John places back at the very commencement of Jesus' ministry. Again and again the Jews try to take him and put him to death, and they even send officers to seize him ; but the officers are overawed by Jesus' words, and return without their prisoner, and the Jews do not dare to resent the disobedience of their subordinates except by a harmless sneer. And yet along with this helplessness, the Pharisees find no trouble in directing the ban of the synagogue against all who confess Jesus,

the people hardly venture to speak above their breath for fear of the Jews, Jesus himself is forced into hiding, and public orders are given that any one who knows his whereabouts shall make it known; and it is just after the most alarming demonstration in Jesus' favor that his enemies cast aside their fears and venture to seize him. To us it is not easy to think of circumstances which make proceedings such as these quite probable, and all the more as a desire to show the majesty of Jesus and the power of his words, to represent the fruitless struggles of the powers of the world against the decrees of God, which only could be carried out when the time was come, would concern itself but little with the probabilities of history. And the way in which at last the catastrophe is brought about, this too is significant. So long as Jesus wishes to protect himself from his enemies he has no trouble in doing this; but he is only waiting till the time is fulfilled, till he can suffer as God has appointed him, as a Passover, a sacrifice for the nation. And when this time comes, he goes of his own accord to meet his fate, he insists that his death is purely voluntary, he goes to the place where he was wont to resort with his disciples that he may not seem to be trying to escape, he knows the traitor from the beginning. Again do we not see how the old account would give offence, how Jesus must be the decider of his own destiny? and yet we cannot hold this view unless we make Jesus' death nothing less than suicide.

We do not care to dwell in detail upon the rest of the story, however instructive such a comparison might be. John for example does not tell of the trial before the Sanhedrin; Jesus is taken to Annas and then to Caiaphas, and from Caiaphas he is led before Pilate, and

whether there is room here for a trial we feel inclined to doubt. Indeed John, if we read him naturally, would seem to say that the trial before Pilate was the only one. Then the strange incident of a voice from heaven, the strange power of Jesus in the garden, where his captors fall before him to the ground,—how hard these are to think of as real events. And again the curious shifting of the scene in Jesus' trial, the negotiations with the rulers and not with the people concerning the release of a prisoner, the omission of the agony in Gethsemane, with only a sentence to show that even for a moment Jesus' "soul was troubled," the greater minuteness of the fulfilment of prophecy in the division of Jesus' raiment, the flowing of blood and water from Jesus' side, so doubtful in itself and so clearly meant to have a deeper meaning, the enormous amount of the embalming spices,—all these and other things cannot in fairness be overlooked. All of them perhaps may be explained away, and if any one is satisfied to explain them away we have no quarrel with him. We only ask that men should see that there is a problem to be accounted for, and that one even may find it not to be accounted for at all in the old way, and still not wilfully be creating difficulties for himself where difficulties do not exist.

Finally we come to the last two chapters of the book, to the events which followed Jesus' resurrection; and here too, if we will not shut our eyes to them, the difficulties are very plain. Upon the great difficulty which we have when we try to conceive of such a resurrection as John's account implies, we will not now insist, although that must be allowed its proper weight. Nor will we compare the Fourth Gospel with the older stories, though here, too, there are things

which need to be explained. So, for one thing, the appearance of the angels to Mary, which lacks all motive here, we cannot well help thinking was taken from the older Gospels, where the angels have a real announcement to make. On this, however, we do not insist, but what we do wish to insist upon is the relation which our story bears to Paul's account. To Paul the resurrection stood as the centre of his faith, and he had made careful inquiries about it when the facts still were fresh. Accordingly, he is able to give the number of appearances and their order, and in his letter to the Corinthians this is what he does. Now Paul is our only witness to the resurrection who is unassailable, and Paul, in a passage where evidently he is trying to be as exact as he knows how, can tell only of five appearances—to Peter, to the twelve, to five hundred brethren, to James, and to the twelve again. But we cannot make this list agree with the list which the Fourth Gospel gives. First, there comes an appearance to Mary, and this Paul does not mention; however, Paul's opinion of women, as we know, was not very high, and perhaps he thought that to bring in Mary as a witness would only be to hurt his case. Then the appearance to Peter, John, it may be, does not exclude, and yet one gets a strong impression from the account, that the appearance in the evening was the first time that Jesus had shown himself to any of his disciples. This latter appearance we must identify with the one which Paul speaks of, though Paul, it is to be noticed, thinks that all the disciples were present and does not know of Thomas's absence. Still, so far the difficulties, while they are real difficulties, are perhaps not inexplicable, but the other differences we do not think can be explained in any natural way.



Of the appearance in Jerusalem a week later Paul knows nothing, for we cannot think that it is the second appearance to the twelve which Paul speaks of, because with Paul this comes last, while with John other appearances follow. Besides, the week which John speaks of does not give time for the appearance to the five hundred, which only could have taken place in Galilee. Finally, the scene by the lakeside, a story which, it is significant, Luke also has in another connection, has no point of contact at all with Paul's list. So that of the four appearances which John gives, there are three which Paul is ignorant of altogether, and in the case of the other one the agreement is not exact. How are we to reconcile the two accounts? Must it not be admitted that they are not to be reconciled?

There are still three incidents which have not been spoken of as yet, because it only is in the Fourth Gospel that they are found, and so they cannot be compared with accounts which have come to us from other sources. But these incidents are so important that they cannot be passed by in silence, and to these it will now be necessary to go back. The first of these is the miracle of the wine, which is found in the second chapter of the Gospel. With the question whether a miracle is possible we are not now concerned; but that in this particular miracle the difficulties which one has to meet are peculiarly great, most critics latterly have been willing to admit. To supply a lack of wine Jesus' mother hints to him, so it seems almost necessary to understand, that he should work a miracle, although Jesus up to this time never had shown any ability to work miracles, least of all a miracle like this. Jesus sharply rebukes his mother, and thereupon goes



on at once to follow out her suggestion,—then there are minor difficulties. Tradition, too, knows nothing of the miracle, and this, when we consider how great a one it was, will also seem to be a little strange. But what after all is the real objection is the fact that we can find no motive for the deed which seems at all strong enough to account for it. There was no real necessity for wine ; the guests already had well drunk, and to supply more would only be to lead to excess. The quantity of the wine which Jesus makes is, one cannot refuse to admit, enormous, and wine moreover was not something there was any need should be created, but it was to be obtained in a natural way. So that there is nothing left for it but to say, as the Evangelist says, that this miracle Jesus performed only to manifest forth his glory. Now a miracle of ostentation is most of all a difficult miracle to hold to. So long as Jesus' works are works of love, of mercy, meant to help the needs of men, as in the older Gospels they for the most part are, then at the least we see a reason why they should be performed ; but when we take away this motive, and leave only the wonder part behind, the magic, one cannot well complain if men find this less easy to accept. And here again we cannot refuse to see how simply all our trouble is got rid of, if only our theory of the Gospel is true. "To manifest forth his glory"—that throughout our Evangelist has it in his mind to do ; and with this in his mind is not our miracle just the sort of miracle he would have been likely to hit upon ? Already he has one miracle before him, the miracle of the bread, and this he refers expressly to the breaking of Christ's body, to the Eucharist. Evidently then there must be another miracle to make this complete, the miracle of

the wine, the blood. A correspondence like this in a real event it is not likely ever would occur ; but as an idea, a result of reflection, it is quite intelligible, and in no other way, we are inclined to think, is it intelligible at all.

In the ninth chapter there is another story which is not present in the Synoptics, the healing of the man born blind. We say that it is not present in the Synoptics, though after all the use of material means to effect the cure suggests that it may be based upon the similar story in the eighth chapter of Mark. In itself, however, this story is not so suspicious as the miracle of the wine, although there are indeed features of it which are suspicious. Again the miracle is to glorify Jesus ; Jesus does not heal the man through pity, and he even tells his disciples that the man was born blind simply that he might have an opportunity to work the miracle. Then too the means which he uses to effect the cure are very strange,—magical, we should almost be inclined to call them. Still to the account as a whole we have no very great objection, and one might even find in it strong indications of its truth. Certainly it is all very vivid and life-like. The coolness and keen, sarcastic common-sense of the blind man, the discomfiture of the Pharisees, the ludicrous eagerness of the parents to keep themselves out of any entanglement, the dramatic movement of the whole, is admirable indeed ; and to many no doubt this vividness of the Gospel seems to be a strong argument in its favor. To us however it has always seemed that this argument is a very dangerous one, and that rather it points quite decidedly the other way. For we have been obliged to ask how it is that John has been able for so many years to keep in his mind just the details

fitted to form a perfect and finished picture ; how, more important still, did he get them at the start? We have been constantly surprised to find how accurately our Evangelist is informed of events where he could not, it would seem, possibly have been present himself. So, here, John knows the conversation of the neighbors, he knows what was said at several interviews with the Pharisees, and what passed between the Pharisees themselves. And if we go through the book we find constantly the same difficulty ; the conversation between the Baptist and his disciples at Ænon, the talk with the woman of Samaria, where Jesus was alone, the talk among the Samaritans themselves, the conversation between the Jews and the impotent man, the murmuring of the Jews once and again about Jesus, the secret plottings of the rulers in council. He knows too the elaborate conversation between Jesus and Pilate ; did John follow back and forth at Pilate's heels, or did he find some soldier of the guard who had enough spiritual insight to report the words? If only once or twice we had to account for this, we should not lay stress upon it, but should say that in some unknown way, which now we only can guess, the information may have come to John ; and even now, if one will have it so, the same thing may be true, for there is nothing of which we cannot conceive a possible way in which it might have become known. But still when everything is put together we cannot think that it is natural to suppose this, least of all when we notice how dramatically the whole is pictured, how artistically all things work together to give an overwhelming impression of Jesus' majesty and power, can we help suspecting that we have to do with an author who is not bound down and hampered by a partial ig-

norance, but who can make his picture dramatic and effective because his picture is ideal.

Last of all there is the story which is the most remarkable, perhaps, of all the stories in the Fourth Gospel, the account of the raising of the dead Lazarus. Here again we will not deny that the miracle is possible, but, admitting that it is possible, we only will ask whether it is likely to have happened, whether the proof for it is clear and unassailable. And to begin with, no one we think can help seeing that the spirit of the miracle, while it is very easy to understand from the standpoint of the Evangelist, is from Jesus' standpoint very strange indeed. That Jesus should let his friend die in order that he might raise him up again, that he should rejoice at the opportunity to work a great miracle, that before the grave he should call attention to his glory in a prayer which was addressed to the people and not to God, is to the Evangelist quite natural, but to us we confess it is not conceivable at all. It is Jesus' compassion, as we have said before, his desire to relieve distress, which most of all gives to his miracles a convincing power. That now he should reverse all this, that he should create the distress in order to relieve it, that he should glorify himself at the expense of Lazarus and his sisters, this is what we cannot bring ourselves to believe. And there is another objection to the miracle which in itself is almost conclusive, the fact that no trace of it appears in the older Gospels. For among the cures of which the Gospels give a great abundance this is by all means the one which is the most striking. To raise a man who has been four days in the grave, this every one must feel is more striking, appeals more to the imagination, than to restore a girl who has died scarcely an

hour before. And not only is this the most striking of Jesus' cures, but it is a cure which took place at the crisis of Jesus' life, and which had much to do in bringing that crisis about. That tradition, with all its love of the marvellous, should have lost sight of an event like this comes little short of being inconceivable, and before admitting it we must have evidence for the reality of the event which is very strong indeed.

And now with these objections before us, if we find that there is a way which will explain how the story came to be thought of, and that there is a curious coincidence which only can be accounted for in this way, then for our part we cannot any longer be in doubt. It happens that there is such a way, and that we still are able to point it out. The name Lazarus is not a common name in the New Testament, and indeed there is only one other place where it occurs, in a parable found in the third Gospel; and the parable of the rich man and Lazarus closes with this sentence, "Neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead." And this is just what John's story means to show, that not even when Lazarus is raised from the dead will the Pharisees believe; their hatred only is intensified, and at once they plot Jesus' death. That the name should occur but once, and then should be found in a passage which lends itself so readily to an explanation like this, is surely a curious fact; we are not able to think that it is a coincidence and nothing more.

We have now gone through the Gospel, and with some detail have shown why we find it hard to believe that the Gospel was written by an Apostle. We have not tried to hunt up objections, but have taken only those which are on the surface; and because there are so many of them, because they all of them point so



clearly in this one direction, we are not satisfied with the attempts which have been made to explain them away, although for each one of them an explanation doubtless can be found. But it is not an explanation simply that we are looking for, we want a probable explanation; and this, although we willingly would have done so, we have not been able to discover. And there is still one thing more, the discourses of the Gospel, which of all things is perhaps the hardest to explain. Against the speeches of the Fourth Gospel there are upon the face of them very obvious objections to be brought. They are all long speeches, some very long indeed, so that for any one to have reproduced them immediately after they were spoken, would have been a difficult thing to do, to say nothing of reproducing them after half a century had passed. Then, besides, the character of the speeches differs very greatly from the sayings of Jesus which the Synoptic Gospels give, so that one would be inclined to say that they cannot possibly have come from the same man; and so far as the style goes this undoubtedly is true, as all critics we suppose are now ready to admit. But that the style belongs to the Evangelist and not to Jesus does not of necessity count for much, for the groundwork of the speeches still might be genuine, even if John had been obliged to give his recollections largely in his own words. But the matter of the speeches also is new, and this is not so easily set aside. The sayings of the Fourth Gospel have a strangely different ring to them: "Except a man be born of water and of spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God"; "No one hath ascended into heaven, except he who came down out of heaven, even the Son of Man"; "That all may honor the Son even as they honor the Father. He



that honoreth not the Son honoreth not the Father who sent him"; "When ye shall see the Son of Man going up where he was before"; "I and the Father are one"; "Before Abraham was, I am"; "All that came before me are thieves and robbers"; "I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world; again I leave the world and go to the Father." In the Synoptic Gospels there is nothing to compare with this, or at the very most there are only two or three faint traces of it; there Jesus speaks of righteousness, of the kingdom of heaven. But here this is the way in which Jesus always talks, and we expect nothing else of him. Now if Jesus uttered sayings like these in so great an abundance, we do not see how tradition came to miss them, for we should suppose they were just the sayings to be seized upon first. But whether Jesus ever could have spoken like this seems fairly to be doubtful. Discussions with the Jews about his divinity, constant claims of a pre-existence, of a descent from heaven, of a superhuman knowledge, these appear to us far more natural in the mouth of a late disciple than in the mouth of Jesus himself. Sometimes this becomes evident even to the commentators, and they suppose—one case is in the talk with Nicodemus—that John suddenly passes from Jesus' words to his own reflections; but there is no ground whatever for supposing this, and the narrative goes along without a break. And the claims which Jesus makes for himself—I am the light of the world, I am the bread of life, I am the water of life, I am the vine, I am the good shepherd, I am the door, I am the way, the truth, and the life, I am the resurrection and the life,—it surely is strange that all these claims, so like to one another, should have been made by Jesus in the com-

paratively few speeches which John has given ; they look much more like the results of reflection upon Jesus' person. Nor is it easy to reconcile these sayings with the fact which we learn from the other Gospels, that it was at any rate only towards the close of his work that Jesus claimed definitely to be the Messiah. Now John himself recognizes this, at least in words, for he makes the Pharisees ask Jesus why he keeps them in doubt, why he does not tell them plainly. But then too Jesus replies to them that he already has told them from the beginning ; and truly if the Pharisees could have been in any doubt after all that Jesus had said and done, they must have been indeed dull of understanding. And another thing which impresses us strongly in these speeches of Jesus in the Fourth Gospel is the lack of sympathy they shôw, the absence of the tenderness and love of Jesus. Jesus takes no pains to win men, to conciliate them ; his words are cold and judicial. There is no divine sorrow over the blindness of his people ; " Unless ye believe that I am he, ye shall die in your sins." Jesus assumes from the beginning that they will not listen to him, and his words are only to assert himself, to make them without excuse. Even when men are beginning to believe on him, Jesus does not try to strengthen the weakness of their faith, but only has a cold word of exhortation for them ; and when they fail to understand this he sharply repels them as children of the devil. These things are on the surface ; and when we come to examine the speeches a little more carefully, we find that there are other things besides. We have had to notice already how artistically the book is made up, how the details are subordinated to a definite end ; and this is even more noticeable in the speeches perhaps than it is

in the narratives. The variety in these speeches is very small indeed; from beginning to end it is to the same thing that all point. There are a few favorite thoughts and phrases which are repeated again and again, and which are dwelt upon in every aspect; one speech indeed, is made up entirely of sentences which already have been given, and seems to be meant as a sort of summary of what has gone before.<sup>1</sup> The speeches are bound closely together, often by cross references. Jesus refers to a miracle performed seven months before, to the disciples he speaks of a saying which six months before he had spoken to the Jews, the Jews attempt to entangle Jesus in argument by bringing up an admission which he had made seven months previously. The speeches, too, are closely interwoven with the events, they take the events as a text, and turn them into figure and symbol. Especially does one have to suspect the conversations which so often occur, and the questions which are put to Jesus; it would be so easy for an author to think of remarks which should help along the progress of the speech and save it from monotony, and in themselves the remarks do not tell very strongly in favor of their genuineness. A conversation with a crowd of men in the manner in which the Gospel often represents it is not quite easy to imagine, and least of all is it easy when Jesus has a miraculous knowledge of what his hearers are talking about among themselves. For, to say nothing of the difficulty about the miracle, it gives one the impression that Jesus had constantly to wait for his hearers to talk his words over, and then that he took up his discourse again to answer them. And the ques-

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<sup>1</sup> John 12: 44 ff.

tions themselves are not probable. The misunderstandings are too constant and too gross, and often the questions are so vague that they hardly have any meaning ; too plainly they only give a catch-word which Jesus can develop. Let us take a single discourse and examine it more carefully, and that we may not be unfair, we will take one where the arguments which can be brought forward for its genuineness are unusually strong. The conversation with the woman of Samaria is very dramatic and spirited, it contains several sentences which show deep spiritual insight, and it betrays a considerable acquaintance with the scenery of the spot, and with Jewish and Samaritan customs. But just because it is so spiritual is it suspicious, easy to understand as an ideal picture, a foil to the unbelief of the Jews, but not so easy to understand as a real scene. The story in the first place does not agree with the facts of history. A successful ministry in Samaria during Jesus' lifetime there are strong reasons for doubting ; after such sayings and such deeds as these the history of the early Church and its slow perception of the universal character of the Gospel is hardly to be understood. Nor is Jesus likely in any case to have amused himself by speaking thus to a dissolute Samaritan woman, to whom his words must have been without meaning ; it is to the reader they are spoken rather than to the woman. The questions of the woman, the remark of the disciples, the approach of the Samaritans, every thing serves as an occasion for this spiritual teaching. But the woman's words, however well they serve this purpose, are not very probable in themselves. The comparison with Jacob, the theological question about the place of worship, are brought in somewhat vio-

lently ; and one remark in particular, when she is made to say, " Give me this water that I thirst not," is all the more likely to be a device of the author's, as he uses it again when he makes the Jews ask, " Evermore give us this bread." Then also the reply of Jesus to his disciples, which gives him the appearance of rejecting the food which they have brought to him, seems in the connection a little artificial for Jesus to have said, for Jesus is not ordinarily so fond of an epigram that he will give a wrong impression in order to get a chance to bring it in. And the words about the harvest also, which certainly seem to be closely connected with what goes before, make no account of the time which must have passed before the Samaritans could come in sight. But what points most clearly to an account which is symbolic and ideal is the strange saying about the woman's past life. This knowledge on the part of Jesus is a little troublesome, even though one holds to the miracles ; if for no other reason because it is something exceptional, because Jesus certainly depended for the most part upon natural means of knowledge. But it seems to us quite plain that we have here nothing but an allegory of the Samaritan nation, that the five husbands are the five religions which, according to the book of Kings, the Samaritan settlers brought in, and that the sixth is the pseudo-Jehovah whom they now were worshipping.

If now, after all the trouble that we have been to, nothing else is plain, this at least will have been made clear, that if indeed we have to do with history at all, at least it is with history of a special sort, history which only is cared about as it expresses an idea. That there should be no doubt about this our author tells us himself that it is so, for he says that he has

written that his readers may believe that Jesus is the Son of God. Nor has he left it doubtful what the Son of God means to him ; at the head of his book he has put a prologue in which briefly his philosophy is summed up. God, says our author, is pure Spirit, whom no man can know directly. But God has revealed himself through a mediator, his Word, through whom the world was made, and who partakes of the nature of God himself. But the world refused to know God, and to lead men into light and life the Word became flesh in the person of Jesus. To all who came to him he gave eternal life, a life which consists in perfect communion with God through him ; but all men did not accept him, and there came about a conflict between light and darkness, between life and death, God and the Devil. And so to the world this appearance of the Logos proved a judgment, and a judgment which was consummated in the very act by which darkness seemed to triumph, by the death on the cross. This very briefly is the argument of the book, though of course such an outline does no justice to its sublime and profoundly spiritual conceptions ; but what we wish especially to point out is that the author's philosophy is not a philosophy which hangs in the air, which is something new with Christian thinkers, but that it has its roots in a definite school of thought which at that time was exerting a deep influence over men, the Alexandrian philosophy of Philo. We do not mean by this that the Fourth Gospel is only a reproduction of Alexandrian speculations, for, on the contrary, the essential thing in the Gospel, the incarnation of the Logos, is profoundly original with it ; but still in its whole mode of thought, in its conception of God and the universe, it is to Philo that



the Gospel undoubtedly goes back. And now with this thought before us, that our author is a man versed in the Alexandrian thought of his day, who thinks he has found the key to that philosophy, its crowning glory, in the person of Jesus, we may gather up the loose threads of our examination, and see what light it casts upon them. Now we are ready to see how completely the book is a work of art centring about this one great idea, how even in the details of its structure the skill of the artist appears, with the dependence on the number three which runs through the book. We see how a great drama unfolds itself before us, the rise, the progress, and the culmination of the conflict between light and darkness ; we see how everywhere symbol determines the choice of the materials, how one miracle shows Jesus as the source of light, another as the source of life, how one points to his body and another to his blood, how the unbelief of the Jews stands over against the receptiveness of the Gentiles. And finally we understand how the speeches, no longer to be forced painfully into the framework of the older Gospels, are only the vehicles of the author's thought, and serve to put it clearly and dramatically before us.

But still, one may say, is it not possible that even so the Gospel may have been written by an Apostle? may not John during his stay in Ephesus have come in contact with the Alexandrian philosophy, have absorbed it and filled it out in just this way, may he not have made a choice of his material for this purpose, and have had a perfect right to do so? That such a thing is impossible we will not say, but probable it certainly is not, and to understand why it is improbable, apart from what has been said already, let us look at it a little more closely. Now there are several arguments that

have been urged against John's authorship which we shall not attempt to defend. Thus many critics, and among them Mr. Arnold, have insisted that the author could not have been a Jew ; to us it seems that he could not well have been anything else. The Greek of the Gospel appears to show this, and so too does the undoubted knowledge which the author has of Jewish customs and beliefs, and even of Palestine itself. We do not feel quite sure that all his references are correct, but at least his mistakes are so few that it would be hazardous to lay any stress upon them, least of all upon the two mistakes which have been insisted on the most. The author speaks of a Bethany beyond Jordan, and it is supposed that he means the well-known Bethany near Jerusalem, and makes a blunder in the situation. He speaks of Caiaphas as the "high-priest of that year," and it is supposed that he confounds the Jewish customs with that of Asia Minor, where there was a high-priest who was elected yearly. But when repeatedly he speaks of the better known Bethany without any qualifying phrase, and shows that he knows its situation, and when he seems to distinguish this from another Bethany, a Bethany "beyond Jordan," it is easiest to suppose that really he does mean to speak of two towns of the same name ; though whether this second Bethany, which never has been discovered, actually existed, is another question. And as for the other statement which he makes, the statement about the high-priest, we cannot help feeling it a little improbable that any one, Jew or Greek, who had so good a knowledge of Jewish affairs as our author certainly had, should have been ignorant about so very simple and notorious a fact as this, not a thing that we could easily credit, unless we were driven to it through lack

of any other explanation. And it is not, we think, wholly imagination which sees something of a tragic significance in those words "the high-priest of that year," the Death Year. Such a touch we should perhaps not look for in an Evangelist like the first three Evangelists, but in our author it is quite what we should expect. Just so he is telling us in another place how Jesus points out the traitor to the disciple who is leaning on his breast, and he adds, "He then, having received the sop, went immediately out: *and it was night.*" Our author, moreover, is well acquainted with the Old Testament, and perhaps he quotes it once or twice from the original; he appeals to it constantly for fulfilment of prophecy, and it tinges the most of his conceptions. Critics, it is true, when Jesus speaks of "all who had come before him" as "thieves and robbers," have tried to make the Evangelist responsible for a very bitter and uncompromising spirit of anti-Judaism, but this is unfair to the whole spirit of the book. On the contrary, of the divine character of the old religion he speaks often and strongly. The Scriptures cannot be broken, they testify of Jesus, Moses and the prophets wrote of him, Abraham rejoiced to see his day, the Temple is to Jesus his Father's house, Israel is *τὰ ἰδία*, God's own possession, salvation is of the Jews. It is very true indeed that the Evangelist is no longer a Jew in sentiment, and his theology is the most spiritual and universal, the freest from national limitations, of any that is to be found in the New Testament. In general, however, it appears that these profounder views of his are added to the popular conceptions rather than take the place of them. Belief in Jesus because Jesus' words are true he places above belief in miracles, but belief in miracles he does not reject.

Jesus is the resurrection and the life, a resurrection and life which is ours here and now; but he also believes in a resurrection at the last day. And with all his perception that the kingdom of heaven is essentially a spiritual thing, he probably holds, as all the early church held, to a speedy second coming of the Lord. What is somewhat more significant, a point which Mr. Arnold specially relies upon, is a certain manner of speaking which the writer adopts toward the Jewish people and their beliefs, which, so Mr. Arnold thinks, a true Jew never could have brought himself to use. So he speaks of the manner of the purifying of the Jews, of a dispute between some of John's disciples and a *Jew* about purifying, of the *Jews' Passover*, the Preparation of *the Jews*. Jesus recalls to his disciples words which he had spoken *to the Jews*, and to the Jews themselves he speaks of "your law." That Mr. Arnold has put more emphasis upon these facts than naturally they will bear there can be no doubt; but perhaps it is true that in an ordinary case, such a case, say, as that of the Englishman whom Mr. Arnold supposes, we should not expect a man to speak in quite so objective a way of his own nation as the author of the Fourth Gospel speaks of the Jews. But then this hardly is an ordinary case. For as Judaism was a religion quite as much as it was a national bond, it would not be hard for a Jew of the Dispersion, even for a Jew of Palestine, to grow strange to it, if he had lived in an atmosphere of Greek culture, and had allowed the peculiarities of Jewish belief to drop away; and most of all this would be easy if he were a Christian, now that Christianity stood in open antagonism to the Jewish nation. But it is when we come to apply this to the Apostle John that we begin to feel its diffi-

culty, for all the conditions which make it possible are signally lacking in the case of John. There is no evidence that John in his conception of Christianity differed essentially from the rest of the Apostles ; on the other hand there is good evidence that he did not differ. For when Paul came to Jerusalem " after fourteen years," he found John still in the city, working alongside of Peter and James, a pillar-Apostle with them. Plainly he is mentioned as one who confined himself to the Jews, who still looked on Christianity as a form of Judaism. Now if John went to Ephesus between 60 and 70 A.D., no doubt we might expect that his new surroundings would have some effect upon him, that he would be broadened a little, and that some of his prejudices would fall away. But still we must set a limit to this ; environment will do much, but it will not work miracles, it will not change a man into his exact opposite, and least of all will it do this when he has reached the decline of life and his real work is behind him. We should be surprised if Alexandrianism were to influence him decidedly in any way ; but that it should destroy his early standpoint altogether, that it should lead him to a universalism beyond that of Paul himself, that from a conception of Christianity as a religion for the Jews it should turn him to a conception of Christianity as first of all for the Gentiles, that those for whom he had spent the best of his life in working should now be set aside with no trace of sympathy or regret, this seems hardly to be credible. And the fact that this universalism goes back ostensibly to words of Jesus' makes it all the harder to understand ; that John should have taken twenty or thirty years to discover their meaning is surely strange, and it throws great



doubt upon the words themselves. So that, taking the probabilities fairly, it does not appear that the Gospel can have been written by one of the Apostles themselves, but it is much more likely to have come from some one who had grown up in the atmosphere of later conceptions, and who did not need to have so violent a change brought about in his ways of thinking.

Now when one comes to this conclusion he will find a number of other things in the Gospel which it will throw light upon. For one thing it will make it easier for him to account for the unusual way in which John is spoken of as the "disciple whom Jesus loved." This we never have been able to look upon as an expression which could be wholly justified in a man's own mouth, even if Jesus really had shown a very marked favoritism, which for several reasons must be considered doubtful. Then in another place John is spoken of as "known to the high-priest," a statement which is much more likely to have been written when the historical conditions had grown dim and uncertain, than to have come from the fisherman himself. True, the commentators have found this only means that John was accustomed to supply the high-priest's kitchen with fish, a thing in itself not quite impossible, if only this were what the author said. But these things we will pass by, for there is a much more important question that must be considered. The whole possibility that John could have written the Gospel depends upon the statement that he passed his last years in Ephesus, and if this tradition is not true the entire case for the genuineness of the book falls to the ground. We hesitate a little to contradict this tradition; in upholding a theory which Mr. Arnold has set aside as a "vigorous and rigorous" theory, we suppose that to many we



shall seem to be attempting a *tour de force* which we hardly would venture to attempt if our view of the Gospel did not make it necessary for us. However, let us first consider how the question stands, and then we shall be able to determine better whether Mr. Arnold is right in settling it in such an off-hand way.

What then is the evidence in favor of the tradition? Apparently it is very strong indeed, no less than the unanimous testimony of the Fathers from the last part of the second century onward. One of these Fathers is a bishop in the very church where John is supposed to have lived, anecdotes are told about the Apostle, he is cited in support of a certain opinion. But clearest and most unequivocal of all is the testimony of Irenæus, so very clear and definite that with it the tradition will have to stand or fall. Now Irenæus tells us that John, the disciple of the Lord, published a Gospel during his residence in Asia, and again that the Church of Ephesus had John remaining among them permanently until the times of Trajan. Papias, he tells us, was a disciple of John's, and he gives a saying which Papias had heard from the Apostle. But what seems quite conclusive, Irenæus remembers in his boyhood to have heard Polycarp, who also, he says, was a disciple of John, and he can recall how Polycarp used to speak of his familiar intercourse with John and with the rest of those who had seen the Lord. Have we the right to ask for any better evidence than this, the words of a man who is within a single generation of John, and who has received his information directly from one who knew John himself.

But before we stop here satisfied with our results, let us consider for a moment what sort of men these are whose testimony we are relying on. We do not in the

least mean that the early Fathers were men credulous beyond their fellows, men who were incapable of appreciating evidence or of detecting the flaws in an argument. This is not so ; on the contrary, many of them were able and clever men, men capable of reasoning acutely, and quite as good witness to a fact as other men of their time probably would have been. But still no one who reads their writings can fail to see at once how completely they are lacking in the power to weigh tradition rightly, in the critical estimate of facts which modern times lay so much stress upon. The Fathers depend constantly upon tradition, they appeal to it again and again, but that they have any appreciation of the immense dangers to which tradition is exposed, that they reckon with the almost numberless chances for error to creep in, they hardly give us any hint. When traditions come in conflict, then they do what they can to reconcile them, but to go back of this and question tradition itself, to ask whether tradition has good grounds for what it says, seems very seldom to occur to them ; and this often is as true when they are dealing with the Greek mythology, as when they are talking about the early Elders and Apostles. Except in unusual cases it is enough for them that a statement has been made by some one who has preceded them ; it does not occur to them to sift the matter any further. This clearly does not prevent them from telling many things that are true, and the fact that they believe them true may fairly keep us from rejecting their statements where we have no special reason for doing this. But it also leads them into many mistakes, and mistakes which are so obvious that we cannot have any doubt about their being mistakes. So that to look with suspicion upon a statement of

theirs, to be ready to reject it, however positively it may be made, if we find that there is good reason to doubt it, is not mere captiousness, but is only what more than once we are compelled to do. Is there then any reason to doubt this statement which Irenæus makes so confidently? Yes, there is a very strong reason, and to understand what this is we must go back to the first part of the century, to a statement which is made by another Father, Papias, the Bishop of Hierapolis. This Papias was a diligent collector of traditions which he published in his five books called the *Expositions of the Logia of the Lord*, and this book Irenæus had before him. Now in one extract Papias gives us the sources of his information. "If then," he says, "any one who had attended on the Elders came, I asked minutely after their sayings, what Andrew or Peter said, or what was said by Philip or by Thomas or by James or by John or by Matthew or by any other of the Lord's disciples; what things (or which things) Aristion and the Presbyter John, the disciples of the Lord, say." This John the Presbyter was, it seems, one of Papias' chief authorities. "He asserts," says Eusebius, who also had read the *Expositions*, "that he heard in person Aristion and the Presbyter John. Accordingly, he mentions them frequently by name, and in his writings gives their traditions." Who then was this Presbyter John?

There can be no doubt whom Irenæus takes him to be, for quite certainly he thinks that he is the Apostle. "Papias," he says, "who was a hearer of John and a friend of Polycarp"; and when Irenæus speaks of John, everywhere he means the Apostle. This much, therefore, we have to start with; and now it is hardly less certain that John, whose disciple Polycarp had

been, and whom Irenæus had heard Polycarp speak of, is this same John the Presbyter, whom we meet with in Papias. Irenæus, as we have seen, clearly understands him to be so ; in just the same way he calls him the disciple of the Lord, and he makes both Papias and Polycarp his disciples. And we can see that Irenæus here could not have been mistaken. That Papias and Polycarp, living at the same time and in the same country, should both have received their traditions chiefly from a disciple of the Lord named John, that neither should have shown the least acquaintanceship with more than one John, and yet that these Johns should have been different persons, is highly improbable. So that this also we may look at as settled, unless we should find exceedingly strong evidence on the other side, that whenever anything is said about a John in Asia Minor, it everywhere has reference to a single man.

Now let us go back to the testimony of Papias and look at it once more in the light of the conclusions we have reached. There are only two interpretations we can put upon this testimony. It certainly is to John the Presbyter, that Irenæus, and therefore the whole tradition of the second century, refers ; and it may be that Irenæus is right, and that the Presbyter is none other than the Apostle himself. But if the Presbyter is not the Apostle, then the evidence for the residence of John in Asia Minor falls away at once ; indeed, this residence is really excluded by what Papias says. The Apostle John, along with the other Apostles, Papias has just mentioned, and he has called them, too, by the same name, presbyters ; so that if his readers had been familiar with the Apostle as one who, within their own recollection, had lived among them,

Papias could not have brought in another John in this way, without a single mark to distinguish him, as if he were the only John whom his readers were acquainted with. The fact that he does bring him in in this way, shows that his readers were in no danger of supposing that by any possibility he could have got his information direct from the Apostle. Is then Irenæus right, when he makes an Apostle out of John the Presbyter? This is what now must be decided.

Well, taking the words in Papias by themselves, it is pretty clear that no one would be likely to come to this conclusion. Papias has already spoken of the Apostle John, and when now in the same list he mentions John again, we cannot easily help referring it to another person. We might suppose, it is true, that Papias is distinguishing what indirectly he had heard about John, and what he had heard directly from John himself, and this perhaps is not impossible; but still it is far from being natural. The words themselves, then, do not naturally fit into Irenæus' interpretation, and indeed the only real argument that there is for that interpretation is the unlikelihood that Irenæus could have been mistaken. Is it conceivable, we are asked, that Irenæus, who with his own ears had heard Polycarp tell of his intercourse with John, could have committed so gross a mistake as to confound the Apostle with an obscure presbyter? is not such a mistake almost beyond belief? No, we answer, however great a blunder it may have been, it is not, when we consider the circumstances, by any means inconceivable. Irenæus, so he tells us, was only a boy when he listened to Polycarp. Now he could remember how Polycarp often had mentioned the name of John and had given sayings of his, how he had spoken with reverence of



him as a man of great age and authority, perhaps as one who in his youth had seen the Lord. And as Irenæus recalled this in later years there would be every inducement for him to connect this name, as tradition very likely before this had connected it in other quarters, with the Apostle John, and to bring the traditions upon which he laid such emphasis into direct contact with the Twelve. To be sure we should not accuse him of a blunder like this if there did not seem to be good reason for doing so; but the blunder is not inconceivable, it is capable of being accounted for.

And that Irenæus did make a blunder seems to us to be almost certain, for to make Papias' words refer to the Apostle John is very difficult indeed. In the first place it is strange that Papias should call John a "presbyter," and "a disciple of the Lord," but not an Apostle. It is true that just before he speaks of the Apostles in a body as "presbyters," but this is a very different thing from selecting this title again and again to name a particular Apostle who is his direct authority, and in itself the use of the word shows that to Papias the Apostles belonged to a past generation, which could be spoken of indefinitely as "elders." But when he speaks of the Presbyter John, and denies this title to Aristion, he apparently is referring to the ecclesiastical office which John filled, and this he hardly would have done if John also had been an Apostle. And then again the way in which John is brought in after the unknown Aristion is quite inconceivable if he were one of the Twelve. And for this conclusion, which surely we must come to if we depend upon the passage itself, we fortunately are not left without a witness. Eusebius, who had the whole



work before him, and who had carefully examined it, says distinctly that Irenæus had made a mistake, and that John was not John the Apostle, but another man. Now when we remember that Papias often mentions John and gives many traditions which had been received from him, we see how improbable it is that Eusebius could have made a mistake about this. Papias could not have had an Apostle's authority back of him, and still have left his readers in any doubt about it; Apostolic authority was not valued so lightly in the second century. The fact that it was not made plain, that even a possibility was left for doubting it, shows conclusively that it was not the Apostle John of whom Papias was speaking. And we have another extract from Papias which points to this same thing, a long saying about the millennium which is attributed to Jesus, and which Papias says was told by John. If John was the Apostle then this chain of testimony is unusually strong, and yet the saying is certainly not genuine, and could not have come from Jesus at all; so that John again hardly could have been the Apostle.

So then, however gross the blunder may seem to us, a blunder we nevertheless must suppose that Irenæus has made, upon the testimony of Eusebius and of Papias alike. Irenæus has no other proof to give for the tradition of John's residence in Asia Minor, only a passage in Papias which really tells the other way, and the presence in Asia many years before of a disciple of the Lord named John. The interest which Irenæus had in believing this to be the Apostle is evident, and we can see now how it influenced him, how indefinitely he speaks of Polycarp's intercourse with John and *the rest of those who had seen the Lord*, how an Apostle grows into *Apostles and many who had seen Christ*, how

Polycarp was appointed by *Apostles* as bishop of Smyrna. But Polycarp, even if John as the last of the Apostles had lived nearly to the second century, could hardly have been much more than thirty when John died, so that his instruction by other Apostles is almost out of the question, and least of all could he have been made bishop of Smyrna by Apostles. The whole of Irenæus' statement must be given up, as Eusebius long ago saw that it must so far as Papias is concerned ; only we must recognize also, what Eusebius failed to see, that with it goes the proof of a residence of the Apostle John in Asia Minor.

If John then did not write the Fourth Gospel, where are we to look for the author ? at what time did the Gospel arise ? The question is difficult to answer, and perhaps it cannot be answered at all in a way that is wholly satisfactory. There is no external testimony of the slightest value which points to any one except the Apostle, nor will we deny that the testimony to the genuineness of the book is of some weight. To start with the last quarter of the second century, we find our four Gospels in full possession of the field. They are unquestioned, they have no rivals, they are held as sacred. So much no one denies, and it is important to remember this because it is just for the reason that critics have lost sight of these broad facts and have plunged themselves into details, that they have come to such different conclusions. For when we come down still farther, to Justin Martyr, about the middle of the century, we find that he too has Gospels which he appeals to as authority for his facts, "Memoirs," he calls them, ἀπομνημονεύματα, composed by the Apostles of Christ and their companions. That he is referring here to certain definite books, and that too to books

which were held in no small esteem, is plain, for he says: "On the day called Sunday all who live in cities or in the country gather together to one place, and the Memoirs by the Apostles or the writings of the Prophets are read as long as time permits." Is it then still our Gospels that he means, and so invests with Apostolic authority? To this question many scholars have answered no, and the reasons for their answer are briefly these, that Justin's quotations very seldom correspond exactly with our Gospels, and that a few of the facts which he mentions, the statement, for example, that Jesus was born in a cave, or that the Magi came from Arabia, are not to be found in our Gospels at all. Into this question we do not care to go, but it seems quite plain to us that, however Justin may have obtained isolated facts, his real sources, those which he refers to under the name "Memoirs," were none other than our Gospels. And without entering into any minute inquiry we can easily see why this must almost needs be so; we cannot readily conceive that books which were looked upon with such high esteem could, within twenty-five years, have given place to other books, which still could be described in just the same terms. It cannot be denied that the evidence for the Fourth Gospel is much weaker than the evidence for the other three; still that Justin does use it, and use it more than once, there can be no reasonable doubt. So he says in speaking of baptism: "For Christ also said, 'Except ye be born again ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven.' But that it is impossible for those who have once been born to enter into the wombs of those who brought them forth, is manifest to all." The quotation is not exact, but the last clause shows that he must have taken it from John;

and apart from this there are at least nine or ten other allusions which cannot be explained plausibly except as going back to the Fourth Gospel. That Justin used the Fourth Gospel, then, we must regard as certain; but it still may be asked whether there is any evidence that he regarded it as John's. Yes, we think that this too must be answered in the affirmative, for unless in Justin's time there had been a strong tendency to look upon the book as the work of an Apostle, we cannot well explain how twenty-five years later the book was accepted without any trace of doubt. But while we are ready to admit this, we think that it is very much more doubtful whether in Justin's time the book was already beyond suspicion, and stood quite on a level with the other Gospels, for otherwise it is difficult to explain the very sparing use which Justin makes of it, a use which will appear the more strange when we compare it with the lavish quotations of Irenæus, a few years later. Already then at the time of Justin the book probably was looked upon as John's, but it still was used very hesitatingly, and possibly it was not yet read in the churches along with the other Gospels.

So much for Justin. And before Justin's time unfortunately the literature which we have is very meagre. Still there are witnesses, and the most important of these is Papias. But Papias does not mention the Fourth Gospel in any of the extracts which Eusebius has preserved for us, and consequently we are led to suppose that he did not mention it at all, for if he had mentioned it, Eusebius would have been most likely to tell us of it. So some critics have come to the conclusion that Papias either did not know of the Gospel, or at any rate that he did not accept it as

genuine, and that accordingly we have here at last an indication of the time when the Gospel made its appearance. Is this a necessary inference, or is it even a very probable one?

Papias tells us: "I shall not be unwilling to put down along with my interpretation whatever instructions I received at any time from the Elders, and stored up in my memory, assuring you at the same time of their truth. For I did not, like the multitude, take pleasure in those who spoke much, but in those who taught the truth, nor in those who related strange commandments, but in those who rehearsed the commandments given by the Lord to faith, and proceeding from truth itself. If then any one who had attended on the Elders came, I asked minutely after their sayings, what Andrew or Peter said, or what was said by Philip or by Thomas or by James or by John or by Matthew or by any other of the Lord's disciples; what Aristion and the Presbyter John, the disciples of the Lord, say. For I imagined what was to be got from books was not so profitable to me as what came from the living and abiding voice." Now what are we to gather from these words? Apparently this, that Papias was concerned to glean from a tradition now fast becoming a second-hand tradition any facts that he might pick up which related more especially to the commandments, the teachings of Jesus. He is not interested in giving us an account of the Christian literature, and indeed he tells us that for this he does not very much care. It happens that he has heard the Elder tell how Matthew and Mark wrote their Gospels and he puts this down; but it is quite incidental, and of the rest of the rich literature which existed in his day, except of the Apocalypse, he has nothing to say. And, supposing that the Gospel were genuine, there would be a



special reason why, when he spoke of Matthew and of Mark, he would not be likely to speak of the Fourth Gospel along with them. Papias is something of an antiquarian, who is getting together for his own generation the oral traditions of a preceding generation because the men of that generation are fast disappearing. Now was it necessary for this aim that he should tell anything about the Fourth Gospel? Certainly it was not. If the Gospel was genuine it must have appeared within his own and other men's recollections. It would be nothing he had heard from the Elders but it would be a fact that was well known, and there would be no reason that would make it necessary for him to mention it. So that the fact that he did not mention it does not prove that he did not know it; it simply proves nothing one way or the other. But may not Papias, if he did not speak of the Gospel directly, have quoted some sayings from it among his interpretations? There is no evidence that he did this, but the fact that Eusebius does not mention any such quotations does not show conclusively that he may not have done it. Eusebius tells us that he means to trace "what portions of the Antilegomena earlier writers had made use of, and what they said about the Homologoumena," that is, when he finds any quotations from the Antilegomena, the books which were disputed, he promises that he will let us know of them, but the Homologoumena, the books which every one accepts, he will only mention if he finds some definite statement about them. And the Fourth Gospel is one of the Homologoumena. So then our answer to the question whether Papias knew the Gospel must depend upon other data, if such data exist. Such data are very scanty, but so far as they go they tend to answer the question in the affirmative. If Papias does



not mention the Gospel, we have the testimony of Eusebius that he did know the Epistle and that he drew proof texts from it. Of course one may say to this that Eusebius made a mistake and did not know what he was talking about, and this indeed some scholars have said. But such a denial has no evidence back of it, and it is all the more improbable as Polycarp has an undoubted quotation from the same Epistle, and Polycarp lived at the same time that Papias lived. And in addition to this is the fact that, according to all the testimony which we have, the heretics of the early part of the century, about the year 125, and in particular Valentinus and Basilides, who were noted heresiarchs, already accepted and made use of the book. Here again it is possible to throw doubt upon the testimony; Tertullian and Hippolytus, we are told, the writers who give us an account of these early heretics, are very inexact in their statements, and when they tell us that Basilides or Valentinus held to this or that opinion we cannot be sure that they are not mixing up the systems of these early heresiarchs with those of their later followers, as they sometimes do mix them up. Perhaps we may not be sure about it, but we hardly are satisfied to reject this testimony altogether, and on the whole it seems more probable that in this case Tertullian and Hippolytus are not mixing up the systems of the early and of the later heretics, but are giving the real views of Basilides and of Valentinus. By the year 125 A.D. the Gospel was then probably in existence. It was not accepted at once, and even in the middle of the century its position was a little doubtful; but with the exception of one small sect there was no decided opposition made to it. It is true that if John had lived in Asia

Minor, and if men were still alive who had known him, we should find some difficulty in accounting for the acceptance of the book ; but as it is the thing is inconceivable only when we carry back into the second century a critical spirit which is quite foreign to the times. The books of the New Testament were still far from being Scripture, and Papias prefers oral tradition to written records in whatever relates to Christ's teachings ; a book was valuable because it was edifying, and no one thought of scrutinizing carefully the evidence for its antiquity. Listen to the argument of Tertullian for the apocryphal Book of Enoch. "I suppose," he says, referring to those who did not accept the book, "they did not think that, having been published before the deluge, it could have safely survived that world-wide calamity, the abolisher of all things. If that is the reason, let them recall to their memory that Noah, the survivor of the deluge, was the great-grandson of Enoch himself, and he of course had heard and remembered from domestic renown and hereditary tradition concerning his own great-grandfather's grace in the sight of God, and concerning all his preachings, since Enoch had given no other charge to Methuselah than that he should hand on the knowledge of them to his posterity. If Noah had not had this by so short a route, there would still be this consideration to warrant our assertion of the genuineness of this Scripture, he could equally have renewed it under the Spirit's inspiration, after it had been destroyed by the violence of the deluge." When reasoning like this could satisfy one of the acutest men of his times, when men did not busy themselves with suggesting doubts, but only with getting rid of them if they were too obvious, we see how impossible it is to

make the acceptance of a book like the Fourth Gospel appear incomprehensible. The very audacity of the book, the audacity of a work of genius, and the harmony in which it stood with the best tendencies of the age, which it carried out and completed, would make it successful where a lesser book might have failed.

But still we have the question to answer, who after all was the author of the book, if the author was not John? is it not indeed possible at least to give some share of the book to the Apostle, to carry it back to him at any rate in part? This is what Mr. Arnold has tried to do, and he has found in the book traces of the hand of one of John's disciples, who had put together after his own fashion what he had heard from his master, and had published it with the approval of the church at Ephesus; upon the Tübingen professors, who have discovered in the book a profound art, Mr. Arnold is very severe. But such a theory as this, apart from the criticism upon the vigorous and rigorous German theories, has too many serious difficulties in its way, which Mr. Arnold has passed somewhat lightly over; for one thing it does not tell us where the greater part of the matter came from. The whole conception of Jesus which dominates the Gospel, the whole historical framework, the composition of the speeches outside of isolated logia, long narratives which contain miracles or which for other reasons we find it difficult to accept,—all this, on Mr. Arnold's theory, we must give to the author and not to the Apostle. Mr. Arnold seems indeed not wholly to have overlooked the difficulty, but the way in which he gets rid of it one might wish had been a little clearer. He does say, it is true, that the narrative "might well be thought, not indeed invented, but a matter of infinitely little

care and attention to the writer," but this is so vague an answer that we hardly can accept it as an answer at all. What Mr. Arnold means we perhaps may guess from the way in which he explains Bethany beyond Jordan. "The author's Palestinian geography was so vague," he says, "that when he wants a name for a locality he takes the first village that comes into his remembrance, without troubling himself to think whether it suits or no,"—a way of going to work which it is not altogether easy for a plain reader to distinguish from invention. And as for the narrative being a matter of infinitely little care to the writer, surely here Mr. Arnold is mistaken. For when a writer devotes fully half his book to narrative, when he is all the time giving notices of time and place, and when he closes with an account of the Passion which is fuller than that which the older tradition has given, this cannot be all a matter of infinitely little care to him. And to suppose, as Mr. Arnold supposes, that the Elders of Ephesus should have added their testimony that it was the Apostle who had "written these things," is, even upon Mr. Arnold's own showing, somewhat absurd.

But what must decide the question for us is the fact that whoever the author may be, he certainly intends to speak in the person of the Apostle John. It is true indeed that this fact has been disputed, and so we shall have to examine it somewhat more closely. As we read the book, we every now and then find ourselves meeting with a certain disciple who, it is clear, stands in some peculiar relation to the work. He is spoken of for the most part as the disciple whom Jesus loved, and he is never named any more definitely than this. This disciple leans on Jesus' breast at supper, and asks

the name of the traitor ; he admits Peter to the palace of the high-priest ; he stands by the cross and receives Jesus' dying message ; he runs with Peter to the empty tomb. He clearly is the unnamed disciple of the Baptist who hears him speak and follows Jesus. And as the narrative has just left him at the cross, without doubt it is to him that appeal is made as a witness to the flowing of blood and water from Jesus' side : " He that hath seen hath borne witness, and his witness is true, and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye also may believe." Who then are we to understand that the disciple is? Naturally we should look for him among the three disciples who were most intimate with Jesus. Now Peter is repeatedly mentioned along with him, and James was early put to death, so that we have only John who is left. And as John is never named in the Gospel, and it is not likely that he would have been passed over without being spoken of at all, we can hardly refuse to see him in the disciple whom Jesus loved. John, then, is the beloved disciple, and from the way in which he is mentioned we are compelled to draw the inference that he stands in some peculiar relation to the work, either that he is the author who is referring to himself in this indirect way, or that he is the source of the statements which the author makes. Now which are we to suppose that he really is, the author, or the source of the author's knowledge?

Dr. Cone, in his chapter on the Fourth Gospel, has no doubt that he is the source of the author's knowledge, and that the language plainly shows that this is so. " For," he says, " certainly the only natural explanation of the passage "—he is speaking of the passage which has already been quoted,— " certainly



the only natural explanation of the passage is that the author refers in it to one who has already borne testimony which he uses and wishes to assure the reader to be trustworthy. An author writing of himself could neither say 'that one,' nor 'hath borne witness.' " Could not say it? Well, we turn to the ninth chapter of the Gospel and we find that our author has put these words into Jesus' mouth: "Thou hast both seen him, and that one it is (*ἐκεῖνος*) who speaketh with thee." Then let us turn to the first chapter, to the thirty-fourth verse, and there again we shall find these words: "I have seen and have borne witness that this is the Son of God." It is the Baptist who is speaking, and the witness he refers to is that which he is just then bearing, a case which we see is perfectly parallel to our passage. So that it is not impossible after all; and indeed if the author is all the while speaking in the third person, as certainly he has a right to do if he chooses, it is the very thing that we should expect. And on the other side, if the author is referring to another person, what can be the meaning of that clause "he *knoweth* that he saith true"? The Apostle is dead now, we remember; and how indeed could any one appeal at all to another person's consciousness of truth? to his truth, perhaps, but not to his consciousness of truth. And then, too, the very indefinite allusion, "he who hath seen," and the fact that the writer never names this authority of his, how are we to explain this? A person who is writing of himself it suits well enough, but it does not suit at all the tone of a disciple who is speaking of his master and of the source from which he gets his facts. Such a reserve is quite out of place; rather should we expect him to tell us very plainly of it, and to make much of the fact



that he has no less authority than that of John behind him.

And that we have found the true explanation is shown very distinctly in the last chapter, where a certain person or persons distinguish themselves from the disciple whom Jesus loved, and name him as the author of the book. Now this certainly appears to make a distinction between the last chapter and the rest of the book, and such a distinction we think is quite unquestionable. At the end of chapter twenty the book evidently comes to a close, and while before this every thing has apparently been written in the character of an eye-witness, in the appendix this is suddenly dropped. Besides the verse which expressly distinguishes the writer from the disciple who wrote the rest of the book, we find such an expression as "the sons of Zebedee," and in the twentieth verse we have a reference to the beloved disciple which is so clearly objective that we can hardly think it is meant to be understood as coming from a writer who is speaking of himself. So that very many critics have come to the conclusion that the last chapter was written by another person. Their confidence, however, we do not find ourselves able to share. The book never appears without this last chapter, so that at least it must have been added very early; and in style the chapter agrees with the rest of the Gospel in a very minute way. We think that the critics have been too ready to suppose the existence of a writer who could imitate at once the conceptions and the style of the Gospel so cleverly, especially as his object in doing this is by no means clear. So that we think it much more probable that we have to do with the same writer who, after speaking throughout the book in the character of the disciple,

now drops the character which he has assumed, and speaks for himself. And the reason for his doing this, if what we have discovered about the Gospel be true, is not far to seek. Just who the author was it is not likely that we shall ever know. We think it is probable that the three Epistles were written by him, the first Epistle certainly, and, as it seems, the other Epistles also, for as forgeries we do not see just what object they could have attained. In this case then, the author probably was a presbyter in one of the cities of Asia Minor, but at any rate he was a man who had reached a new conception of Christianity, a philosophy of religion, which, as Jesus stood at the centre of it, he wished to carry out in a representation of Jesus' life ; and in accordance with a very common literary custom he determined that it should be written in the person of one who actually had lived in Jesus' time, and who should stand for the religious conception which he had to represent. It was natural that he should choose one of the three disciples who were especially close to Jesus ; but James had early been put to death, and Peter had come to stand so definitely for Judaic Christianity, the Gospel of the Circumcision, that he could not very well be made to represent a Gospel which was purely spiritual and universal. So that John alone was left, and him the author chose. But while John certainly is meant by the beloved disciple, yet it is true also that he appears rather as an ideal figure, as a representation of the spiritual Christianity of the Gospel, than as the actual, the personal John. It is only in this way that we can explain why his personal name never is applied to him, and why Jesus' especial love for him is so often insisted on. And this also explains the very peculiar relation in which John stands to Peter—Peter, who

represented Judaic Christianity. In the early Gospels it is Peter who without question stands first among the disciples, but in the Fourth Gospel this is completely reversed, and reversed in such a significant way that we scarcely can refuse to see it. It is John, not Peter, who is called first ; he leans on Jesus' breast at supper and acts as a mediator between Peter and the Lord ; at the betrayal he follows Jesus boldly where Peter follows with trembling, and it is through him that Peter enters the palace. He alone stands by the cross and receives the Lord's mother into his charge ; he outruns Peter in coming to the tomb. Now as history this is all very doubtful, for to take only the part which John plays at the crucifixion, the older accounts make it clear that the disciples forsook Jesus at the betrayal, and that only Peter ventured to follow timidly at a distance. But here John, to say nothing of the difficulty of his being known to the high-priest, appears with no trace of fear, and apparently is present throughout the whole proceedings. The older Gospels again exclude the presence of any of the disciples at the cross, and only speak of a few women afar off ; but here John remains at the very foot of the cross till the end comes, a thing which we must think is quite impossible. In all this there is no hostility to Peter, but still he must everywhere be second, he must, so we cannot help thinking, give place to the purer Christianity which John represents. And the appendix in our view is no after-thought, but the author's statement of this, it is the carrying out of the allegory which appears throughout the book. To Peter the Lord restores his favor, he entrusts him with the care of his sheep ; but then he predicts to him his death. And Peter, turning to the beloved disciple, asks,

“Lord, and what shall this man do?” And Jesus answers: “If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? follow thou me.” Jewish Christianity, material and partial, has its work to do, but it is to pass away; the higher, the spiritual Christianity is to endure till Christ himself shall come. Does any one think that this is forced, that it is a play of fancy? But we have failed entirely if we have not shown that throughout the book there is much which has no explanation unless it is explained in just such a way as this. And right at this crowning point the author gives us a hint of his purpose: “Yet Jesus said nōt unto him, ‘He shall not die,’ but, ‘If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?’”; what does this mean if it is not to warn the reader that there is something behind the natural meaning of the words, something which will give him the key for understanding them? Such allegory may seem strange to us now, but it was not strange to men of the second century, and certainly it was not strange to a writer who, sending a friendly letter to a neighboring church, addresses the church as “Lady,” and keeps up the figure to the end.

This then we must recognize if we are to understand the book: that the history, the facts, are not facts at all, but only an outward dress, a picture of the ideas which the author wishes us to see beneath them. The author does not mean them to be accepted as facts, and the very boldness of his attempt shows his ingenuousness; a man who had gone to work cunningly with an intention to deceive, would have kept much more closely to the ordinary tradition, for it would have occurred to him that he must not depart too far from the regular road, that he must make his work not too difficult to accept. To call the book a forgery is to lose all sight of the

different point of view from which men once looked at the matter, and to forget that it was then a perfectly legitimate device ; in reality it corresponds more nearly to a modern work of fiction. At this very period we have traces of a number of books in which, under the name of some famous man, often under the name of an Apostle, an author presented his opinions, and which no one would think of calling dishonest ; and of these our Gospel is only one. But among these it stands alone as a work of the highest genius. As history it has no value, but as the highest expression of religious philosophy which Christianity produced, it will always remain, as Luther called it, "the only tender, true chief-Gospel." The form in which its philosophy is expressed we may sometimes have to discard, but the substance remains untouched. The thought of Jesus as a revelation of God in man, the absolute freedom of worship, the dominion of truth, eternal life as something which is essentially spiritual, a present possession which consists in perfect communion with God, —this and more besides has become our permanent inheritance, and to the Fourth Gospel we owe it most of all.







### CHAPTER III.

#### THE CREDIBILITY OF THE GOSPELS.

**B**EFORE entering upon any positive sketch of Jesus' life and teaching, it will simplify the problem materially if we can come in some approximate degree at an estimate of the amount of historical credibility which is to be assigned to the Gospel narratives, and so can get some standard which may be applied to the more doubtful cases. It may be said that this is precisely the object of the whole investigation, and can only come as a result at the end, after all the facts have been examined ; and up to a certain extent this is true. But against such a method, if followed out strictly, there is this objection, that the reader quickly gets involved in a tangle of conflicting probabilities and provisional results, and becomes so bewildered in trying to extricate himself that he loses sight of his path, and has at the end only a confused notion of the ground over which he has been travelling. It ought to be possible, by selecting out the cases which are the clearest, to obtain an answer to the question in a general way, and so to clear up in some measure the road to a positive reconstruction. Moreover, in the present case this becomes a necessity in view of the fact that we have the question of miracles to settle, and this is a



question of so peculiar a nature that it can best be disposed of by itself. We shall therefore first discuss the question of the miraculous, in its bearing upon the historicity of the Gospels, and then shall try to find some general criterion as to the trustworthiness of each individual book which has come down to us.

In starting once again on the question of miracles, one cannot help a disheartened feeling that probably nothing which he shall say will have the least effect upon those who do not already agree with him. Nevertheless, some of the unsatisfactoriness which is incident to such discussions may perhaps be eliminated by defining carefully the grounds on which it is proposed to argue. In the present case these will be historical grounds simply, and all purely philosophical considerations, just so far as one can help making use of those principles which lie at the bottom of his mental make-up, and form the medium which inevitably tinges his view of things, will be ruled out. This is not saying that philosophical arguments deserve to have no weight, for it is not reasonable to ask a man to accept, without special evidence, that which goes flat against the best conceptions he has been able to form of the universe. But if such arguments are to have any practical effect in convincing others, one will first have to prove that his philosophy is right, and that in itself is liable to be a matter of difficulty. And besides there is some justification for the distrust with which in general purely philosophical considerations are apt to be viewed, for after all the universe is a very vast and a very complex thing, and when the philosopher undertakes to prove that this or that event cannot occur, the possibility that there is something which he has failed to take into his account is so great, that no one, except per-

haps the philosopher himself, is quite ready to look upon the matter as settled. We therefore shall consider that we are spared in our character as historian the somewhat tedious task of trying to show that a miracle is an impossibility or a philosophical absurdity, and shall make no assumption whatever about the matter. And this may be supposed to give us the privilege of passing by as well those arguments on the other side, which have attempted to show that a miraculous revelation is just the sort of thing we ought to look for. The two may be considered to balance each other.

But in refusing to assert that miracles are impossible, it is not of course intended to say that they have lost any of their inherent improbability, though many seem to imagine that this step is an easy one, and to consider that after they have shown that the possibility of a miracle is not absolutely excluded, the bulk of their work has been done. But this shows an entire failure to appreciate the nature of the problem. The strength of the case against miracles lies first of all in the historical argument against them, and this must have a preponderant influence. Now as a matter of fact, leaving out this single period which is in dispute,—for the Old Testament miracles are the weakest of broken reeds, and can only be bolstered up by the very strongest evidence from the New,—we know that events in nature have come about according to definite and unvarying laws, and that miracles have not happened. But—and this is the real point of the matter—*miracle-stories* are the commonest things in the world, and have sprung up in the greatest profusion in every age, not excluding the present one. There is therefore against the miracle-stories which are recorded in the

Gospels the overwhelming presumption which is afforded by these two facts, that events of such a nature as those which the Gospels relate are absolutely unknown, whereas the collections of miracle-stories which exist are indefinite in number, and in every other case they are demonstrated to be baseless. Accordingly, there is an immense presumption that in this case, too, the phenomena are not to be explained in some new and strange way, but just as the same phenomena have been explained before. It is not necessary to say with Hume that this presumption is absolutely conclusive. Suppose that miracles actually have happened, and there is nothing in it to render impossible a proof of their occurrence which to all practical intents shall be a satisfactory one. If it could be shown conclusively that the writings which described these miracles came from the hand of eye-witnesses, or else from their immediate hearers, if the good faith of all the parties concerned could be made morally certain, if the miracles were of such a character that they could not be attributed without the greatest forcing to a blunder or mistake, and if there was nothing in the rest of the history or the literature of that time to contradict or throw doubt upon their testimony—all of which is conceivable enough,—it hardly would be fair to make any further demands. To put the case more concretely, if our four Gospels could be shown to have proceeded from the men whose names they bear, with as much probability as it can be shown that the Epistle to the Romans comes from Paul, there would be little more to say. But again it must be insisted that such a hypothetical case destroys none of the antecedent improbability of miracles, and that they are to be treated with the utmost rigor and suspicion. And in this respect the

Gospel miracles do not have the slightest advantage over their fellows. Such a claim is sometimes made for them, based chiefly upon the unique character and personality of Jesus, and to this extent it may be conceded that the claim has an element of truth in it, that if on independent grounds the truth of the miracles can be sustained, then the uniqueness of Jesus will go a little way to make them more conceivable. But in so far as it is intended by this to weaken the antecedent suspicion with which miracles are to be regarded, and to deprecate the most searching criticism of them, the plea is entirely without force. The uniqueness of Jesus does not make it unlikely that miracle-stories should have grown up about him, nor does it make it probable that he will really work miracles himself, simply because spiritual greatness has no sort of connection with miracles at all. One might argue much more forcibly on the other side that miracles, which in every other case are a proof of superstition and of error, are the very last things by which we should expect Jesus to attest his greatness and his truth. What the defenders of the miracles are called upon to prove is, not that they are connected with the person of Jesus, but that in themselves they are quite different from other miracles ; and as this is just the question at issue, it can have no influence with us at the start. It is true that upon the whole the Gospel miracles are more sober than those of other great cycles of miracle-stories ; but that is not a matter of any special moment. Nor do vague impressions of the truthfulness and historical character of the narratives count for anything, for of course those things will have the flavor of reality to us which we have always been accustomed to believe were true. What we are bound to do is

to rid ourselves as much as possible of the glamour which the sacredness of the story has cast about it, and then subject the story to precisely the same tests which we are accustomed to use elsewhere. If the story will not stand these tests, with what face can we blame people if they do not accept the story as true. The great fault of Christian Apologists lies just here, that they have been too indulgent to the Gospels, that they have refused to treat them rigorously, and they practically have asked us to approach the miraculous as a perfectly open question, to be decided upon the same degree of evidence which would satisfy us in the case of a natural event. But of course this cannot be admitted for a moment. To be sure we come to the miracles with a prejudice against them, and any one who comes in a different way is totally unfit to reason on the question. Accordingly, we shall assume they are not true till we find the very strongest evidence for changing our opinion ; we shall search for errors and contradictions ; between two divergent accounts, the one which has least of the miraculous in it will be unhesitatingly preferred if other things are equal ; the ability to show how a miracle might have arisen will be considered as sufficient proof against it. Instead of confining ourselves to the cases for which the most can be said, and slurring over those which are most suspicious, and bear more clearly the marks of legend, we shall consider that the latter are particularly significant in their bearing, and that instead of being buoyed up by the others they tend to drag the others down with them. Hypotheses for harmonizing the discrepancies which occur in parallel accounts we shall not regard as needing refutation, because the problem is not to show that the different versions may



be reconciled, but that the presumption against the story itself can be removed, and its falsity shown to be out of the question. We shall not deem it necessary to account definitely for each individual miracle, or to point out just the logical process by which each detail arose, because logic is the last thing to be expected, and because it is the very nature of the growth of miracle-stories to be irresponsible and incalculable. This is simply what we do in other cases. There are many other miracles for which the external evidence is strong to a surprising degree, and yet we do not hesitate in the least to set conjecture over against the clearest testimony, and to reject the testimony at once. It is just in this that a miracle differs from a natural event; we do not balance the evidence, but so long as there is a possibility that a mistake has been made, we accept that possibility as established. If any one objects to this way of proceeding, we really do not know what to say to him. He is asking us to slay the miracles after taking every weapon out of our hands.

Now to begin with, the existence of miracle-stories in the early Christian communities does not furnish the least difficulty, but it would have been a most surprising thing if legend had not been actively at work. Every condition was present in an unusual degree, ignorance, an unwavering belief in the possibility of the miraculous, an intense religious excitement; and at other times these conditions have given rise to just the sort of phenomena which we find in the age of the Apostles. And right here one great objection to the miracles lies. If it were only in the life of Jesus that we found them, then we could at least see some principle to account for them; but when we find



that the Apostles too worked miracles, and that many of the other Christians were credited with the same power, when we see the miraculous stretched out through several centuries, and only dying gradually away, do we not see that this has all the marks of a natural phenomenon and not of a divine revelation? There is the case of the Apostle Paul, the clearest and the most unequivocal of any in the New Testament; Paul believes that the men about him have the power of working miracles, and he believes that he, himself, has worked them,—could there be any more definite testimony than this? But St. Bernard also believed that he had worked miracles, and it surely cannot satisfy us to say that Bernard must have been mistaken, and that Paul must have been right. It is just for this that there is no proof whatever. Paul had no better knowledge than his age had, and he was as likely as any one to account for a surprising event, of which he did not understand the cause, as a work of divine power. We have a clear evidence of this in a case which is very similar to the case of miracles, the so-called gift of tongues. There can hardly be any doubt that this gift, which Paul describes in his letter to the Corinthians, was only a form of strong religious excitement, which we cannot call inspired unless we are willing to give the same name to the similar outbreaks among modern sects, an excitement, moreover, that was capable of leading to great abuses. But Paul, while with much good sense he rebukes these excesses, and will not allow that the gift stands very high in the scale, yet has no doubt that it is of divine origin, and that it enables the disciple “in the spirit to speak mysteries.”

In such an age, therefore, we should look for miracle-

stories, even if we had to do with actual eye-witnesses ; and yet in this case the chance for mistake would be very much lessened, and we should expect to be able, with some probability, to sift out what actually had happened. But Paul, who speaks of his own miracles, fails to give us any concrete instance of them, while the writers on whom we must depend for our examples, not only cannot be proved to have been eye-witnesses, but most probably had some of them never seen an eye-witness ; so that the chances for error become almost infinite. To make one who does not wish it see that in the Gospels there are clear traces of legend, which we can even watch in its growth, we fear is hardly possible, for we know how strong a hold the Gospel narratives have over men ; but we think that without any doubt the evidence is there. Not to start in with the Gospels themselves, there is a very good example connected with the phenomenon which has just been mentioned, the gift of tongues. The author of the Acts has at the beginning of his book an incident which took place on the day of Pentecost, and there can be no reasonable doubt that the phenomenon is the same as that which is described by Paul. But how does the author understand it ? Why, he thinks that it is nothing else than a speaking in foreign languages ; he makes a miracle out of what we have the clearest proof was something very different. Commentators have tried in the most artificial of ways to avoid this conclusion, and we believe have charged it to the arbitrariness of rationalistic criticism ; but this always has been upon the assumption that the account is thoroughly reliable, and that a mistake is the last thing to be admitted. If we once will admit that a miracle in itself is suspicious, we shall wonder how any other

explanation could ever have been thought of, when so simple a one lay at hand. Now this same thing can be traced in the Gospels as well, a tradition which is constantly growing more and more legendary by a process which we often can detect taking place under our very eyes. It is no accident that the stories which are peculiar to Matthew, the stories of Jesus' infancy, the miracle of the coin in the fish's mouth, the walking of Peter on the water, and the resurrection of the saints at the death of Jesus, belong to the latest stratum of the Gospel literature ; and they are no whit harder to account for than a host of legends about saints and martyrs. How natural it would be to collect wonders about as stupendous an event as Jesus' death ; how natural, too, still to keep the risen saints in the grave, that they should not anticipate Jesus' resurrection ! The story of Peter's walking on the water, a transparent allegory of the Apostle's fickleness, is especially instructive, for not only by its connection with the walking of Jesus on the sea does it reveal the source from which its form was derived, but we also have this story about Jesus in an earlier Gospel, which evidently is quite ignorant of Peter's experience. And this story, too, about Jesus, as appears from the way in which he stills the tempest, we probably can trace to a simpler story which was present in a still earlier Gospel, where Jesus is only represented as calming the storm.

And in Luke's Gospel the same process is plainly visible. A comparison of Luke with Mark, in the incident of the high priest's servant, will give an illustration of the way in which the determined miracle-monger can make use of the merest hint. Tradition had told how one of Jesus' captors had lost an ear

through the zeal of a certain disciple. But this is too good an opportunity for a miracle to be lost, and so in Luke we find that the ear has been healed by a touch from Jesus' hand. How arbitrary the favorite device is of supposing that the absence of an incident in the earlier accounts is simply a failure to tell the whole story appears in this case, for it is incredible, if a miracle really had occurred, that the earlier narratives should just have given the unimportant introduction to it, and have omitted the miracle itself, for which the incident would be remembered. It is as if one should recall the rising of the curtain, but forget that the play had followed. Jesus had the power to heal the ear,—such the reasoning seems to have been,—and, therefore, the ear was healed. Similarly in the story of the Resurrection, while the rest of the accounts are content to say that the stone was rolled away, Matthew knows just how the whole thing happened, and brings the women on the scene to witness the event. Of course, the writers imagine that they are giving the real facts of the case, and the freedom of their conjectures might readily be paralleled among the Rabbis or the Fathers, or among modern scholars even ; but, nevertheless, we must recognize what a wide field it gives for error and mistake. The miraculous draft of fishes, which is given in Luke, is another case in point ; how can we fail to see on what a slender thread the whole thing hangs, when we find that there is an earlier account of the very same incident, in which the miracle is not so much as hinted at ? With a miracle to start with, how could the very fact of its occurrence have dropped out of sight, when the incident was told ? And in a similar way, in the account of a visit to Nazareth, we find that Luke has brought

in a miraculous escape on Jesus' part which Mark knows nothing of.

If we recognize then that legend has been at work, we see how irresistibly it will burst through all the limits we may try to set to it, and how difficult it will be to save a part of the miraculous at the expense of the rest. As we said before, we shall not undertake to account perfectly for every story, and very likely there are some whose special motive it is no longer possible to discover. But there are others again which can be explained with perfect confidence. The rending of the Temple vail, for example, is clearly only the materialization of a doctrinal truth, a metaphor turned into actual fact; and the story of the ten lepers, to say nothing of the unlikelihood that Jesus should have healed men like this in batches, is little more than an allegory in disguise. These examples will suggest one set of influences which would be at work to produce miracle-stories,—doctrinal views, that is, about Jesus and his work, and especially such views as became in later years a centre of controversy; although we are not disposed to give a very prominent place to this. Then there would be the fruitful influence of the Old Testament, which Strauss laid so much stress on, and which we cannot doubt was active from the first. Among men to whom it was self-evident that the Old Testament was filled with types and prophecies of the Messiah, the tendency was irresistible to find these types fulfilled in Jesus' life, and to them an Old Testament quotation would be as clear a proof as one could wish for. One evident example of this we have in the account of Jesus' entry into Jerusalem, where the first Evangelist has two animals in place of the single one of the older account; and the proof he gives for his



change is simply a passage from Isaiah, "Behold, thy king cometh, sitting upon an ass, and a colt, the foal of an ass." This example is the more striking because it all comes from a mistaken interpretation, and a failure to notice the parallelism in the Old Testament account. Of course it would not be difficult to put too much stress upon the influence which was exerted by the Old Testament, and in no case ought it to be divorced from the all-pervasive craving after miracles. One certainly is not to think of a conscious feeling of the need of supplying parallels in Jesus' life, without which there would have been no tendency to legend at all. A well-defined feeling of this sort does not appear to have existed, for it is rarely that we find, what in such a case we might look to find, stories which manifestly are copies throughout. But with a tendency to legend once given, and sure to make itself felt in one form or another, the influence of the Old Testament would go a long way to determine what that form should be, and besides would give an immense impetus to the whole movement, by furnishing ready to hand a great mass of material in every way suited to the purpose, and everywhere familiar, particularly if theological and controversial interests stood ready to give each newly discovered point of contact a warm welcome, and find for it general acceptance. Furthermore, there is the possibility that a saying or a parable may have grown into a narrative of a real event, and this seems in part to be the explanation of the cursing of the fig-tree. This story is not creditable to Jesus, and one might wish to get rid of it even apart from the miracle. There seems to be no good reason for thinking, as some have done, that Jesus meant this act just to give his disciples a striking object-lesson, with the Jewish na-



tion as its text. The account itself hardly would suggest this, but rather would suggest that it was regarded as an illustration of the power which faith puts in the hands of the believer, for this is all that Jesus has to say in explanation of it. So then, when we find that these words which are given to Jesus really were spoken on another occasion,<sup>1</sup> and when we find that a parable actually has come down to us about a barren fig-tree which was threatened with condign punishment, it hardly seems necessary to hunt any further for an explanation of the story. These three tendencies at least we may constantly be on the lookout for, but besides these there would be numberless other ways in which a miracle-story might be suggested. It would be hopeless at the present day to expect to find in every case just what the starting-point for the story was, but it often can be suggested with a good deal of probability. The story of the miraculous feeding may be taken as an example. So far as external authority goes this is the best attested miracle to be found in the Gospels. Each of the four Evangelists has his version of it, and indeed two of them have given us a double version, though that perhaps is hardly to be reckoned a point in its favor. But unless one stands ready to stick by the miraculous through thick and thin, there are peculiar difficulties about this story which make it very hard to accept on any testimony. Without insisting on the fact that there really is no adequate occasion for so stupendous an event, our narrative brings out clearly a difficulty, which often is suffered to drop out of view by reason of the dim religious light in which the miracles are kept enveloped, but which the mind inevitably feels when it tries to picture to itself a miracle as actu-

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<sup>1</sup> See Luke, 17 : 6.

ally taking place. For this reason the healing-miracles are somewhat less difficult to believe in, because there the process is a hidden one and does not appear to call for a very close scrutiny ; but in the nature-miracles it is otherwise. It is a very different thing to say in general terms that God has omnipotent power, and actually to think of a loaf which has been broken suddenly become whole again, or of a new loaf instantly appearing when one has been picked up. The whole thing has an air of magic about it, of *legerdemain* ; it is what we expect to see at a conjuror's entertainment, and instinctively we shrink from connecting it with Jesus. In this story too there are points of contact with the Old Testament, but perhaps the real clue to the narrative is supplied by the Fourth Evangelist, when he connects it with a discourse which points to the Lord's Supper. Jesus sitting at the head of the table, blessing the food and distributing it to his followers, it is very likely that we have here a reflection of the simple love-feast of later days carried back into the legendary atmosphere of Jesus' own life.

So far no mention has been made of a theory which in the past has had a great place in the criticism of the miracles, and which must always be recognized as at least a possibility. After the suspicion once gains ground that miracles are of doubtful credibility, the most natural step, because the shortest, is to assume that some real historical event lies at the bottom of each story, but has been given a wrong twist through misunderstandings on the part of eye-witness or narrator. But the absurdities into which the old rationalistic criticism fell in trying to carry out this method, furnish a sharp admonition that the method is at any rate to be employed with the utmost caution. There

are decided difficulties in the way of such a theory. If it is to be carried out with any plausibility a good share of the blame has to be laid upon the eye-witnesses themselves; and the existence of so many events in Jesus' life which would lend themselves so easily to a mistake, together with the negligence of Jesus in correcting these mistakes, and the very considerable degree of stupidity on the part of the spectators, is in itself extremely odd. But in the case of one particular class of events, the miracles of healing, it might seem that the theory stood a good show of being carried out with success, and it will be necessary to examine these with some detail.

There is in all three of the Gospels the account of an argument which Jesus had with the Pharisees about a demoniac whom Jesus had cured. The man is called a dumb demoniac in the older account, and there is nothing very improbable in this, though the fact that in Matthew the dumb man has become blind as well, ought to suggest caution about relying too implicitly upon details. However, the main point is that a remarkable cure had been effected in a way that was open and undeniable, and this much must be regarded as beyond reasonable doubt. And it is to be noticed in passing that just here, when for the first time we get on firm ground, the miraculous appears in a particularly dubious light. This matter of possession furnishes a striking example of the disturbing influence which a wrong point of view to start with may exert. If the upholder of the miracles would try seriously to realize the impression which a case of this sort must make upon a mind not already prejudiced in favor of the miraculous, he perhaps would be more ready to admit some reason for his opponent's scepticism. For

his own part he has convinced himself already, and he can afford to pass somewhat lightly over what makes against him ; but if one has not as yet reached this position, the case against the influence of demons in disease seems as complete as one could reasonably ask for. The phenomena known as possession by no means appear for the first time with Jesus. The belief was already current among the Jews when Jesus was born, and it is continually being met with among other nations before and since. This very passage shows that Jewish exorcists sometimes were successful in their treatment of such cases ; and in the days of the Fathers, as well as in later times, there are well authenticated instances in which cures were effected by means which were looked upon as miraculous. Accordingly, if we are to maintain our view that Jesus' cure was a miracle, and the actual casting out of a demon, we either must suppose that of two cases, not outwardly different, the one is a miracle and the other is a natural event, which is not very convincing ; or we must say that the others too were miracles, and that the Jews before Jesus' time were divinely guided to a correct diagnosis in this special class of diseases, and this is quite as unsatisfactory. Moreover, phenomena of the same sort occur at the present day, and have been shown beyond any doubt to come from natural causes. The whole attempt to save the credit of the Evangelists is artificial, and does not deserve consideration in view of the perfectly obvious explanation that the Evangelists simply were accepting the erroneous belief of their day, as of course it was to be expected they would do. But what we are concerned about more particularly is the explanation which Jesus himself gives to this cure, " If I by the power of God

cast out demons, then doubtless the kingdom of God is come nigh unto you." Now in just this case such a saying was true in a special manner. Most of the diseases which were classed under possession were very largely of a mental nature, and often of a moral nature as well ; that is, they were most likely to prevail in an age where, along with an intense belief in the supernatural, there went great wickedness and highly wrought passions ; and the breaking of the power of such diseases was connected in an immediate way with the sane and healthful views of the kingdom of heaven which Jesus taught. But the words also suggest the question whether Jesus did not carry out the idea further still. It is perfectly possible that a strong and beneficent nature such as Jesus' was, and especially in such an age as the age in which Jesus lived, might have had a much wider influence over sickness than this ; that Jesus might have carried on a somewhat extended ministry of healing which he looked upon as a special token of God's presence, and which he thus appealed to in support of his mission.

Now it must be noticed that this is rather more than can fairly be got out of the argument with the Pharisees when taken by itself, for it is not just the same thing to make a passing argument *ad hominem* in answer to an attack which actually has been made upon him, and really to rest his authority upon this argument, and make continual use of it. Still the latter is not impossible, or even very unlikely. To be sure we may not like to find that Jesus has fallen into such a mistake, but the possibility that he should be mistaken must be conceded. If he had found himself possessed of the power of working remarkable cures, it is conceivable, with his vivid sense of God's imme-



diate presence in the universe, that he should have attributed his success more directly to God's special and unusual agency than one who had a more modern and scientific view of the world would feel justified in doing. And this might seem to account admirably for several puzzling things in the Gospels. It would account for the unwavering and comparatively early testimony to such miracles of healing in Jesus' life ; it would account for a number of sayings attributed to Jesus in which he seems to claim for himself miraculous power ; and it would serve at least as a basis in accounting for those narratives which have been especially stubborn in resisting a mythical and legendary explanation.

So far as the general descriptions of Jesus' healing go, when they are not backed by something concrete and definite they cannot be held to count for very much as evidence. The greater part of them are due to Mark, and they seem to be nothing more than inferences or generalizations from the concrete stories. If the source from which Mark drew told how the disciples had been commissioned to heal the sick, and then if Mark proceeds to tell how the sick were healed, his statement cannot be assigned any independent value. Moreover, if cures really did occur in the case of demoniacs, as we are ready to admit, even though there may have been no great number of them, this would be quite enough to give a start to tradition, and it only would require a moderate amount of time to grow into a general healing ministry. But this tells nothing as to what Jesus' attitude towards these cures may have been, and to answer this question it will be necessary to examine, first the sayings which are attributed to Jesus, and then the narratives of special cures which seem to deserve particular attention.



When John sent messengers to Jesus to ask him about his Messiahship, Jesus did not send back a direct answer. "Tell John," he says, "the things which ye do hear and see : the blind receive their sight, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good tidings preached to them. And blessed is he whosoever shall find none occasion of stumbling in me." This reply is not altogether above suspicion, and yet there does not seem to be ground enough for rejecting it in its essential features. Assuming then that words resembling these really were spoken by Jesus, on the surface they might seem to furnish an answer to the question, and to show that Jesus had performed some remarkable cures upon which he was content to rest the proof of his Messiahship. But as soon as one begins to examine the answer, he will see that this is by no means so certain as it might appear. To be sure it must be admitted that in their present form the words refer most naturally to the actual healing of diseases, and the Evangelists evidently understand them in this way ; but there is nothing at all violent in the supposition that the saying may have been modified somewhat in the course of transmission, through a desire that it should conform more exactly to the cures which actually were reported of Jesus. And in favor of this there are two facts to be considered. In the first place the selection of examples is strange in Jesus' mouth. The cure of demoniacs, which is well attested, is not mentioned at all, and the things which are mentioned, the cleansing of lepers and most of all the raising of the dead, even the Gospels recognize as marking an exceptional height of Jesus' power, so that they could not have been spoken of in this way as ordinary occurrences. But it would have been quite

natural for a later disciple to choose for his samples those instances which seemed to him most striking. And again there is the fact that undoubtedly the saying has a reference in it to a set of passages in the book of Isaiah, and so is likely in the first instance to have corresponded somewhat more closely to these than it does at present. But at any rate this connection with Isaiah has an important bearing on the manner in which the saying ought to be interpreted. In Isaiah these passages in part describe in a highly figurative way the blessings of the Messianic age, and in part they refer solely and unmistakably to facts which are purely spiritual ; in no case however would they be satisfied by the bodily healing of a few sick people. Now it certainly is true that Jesus might have understood that these words were to be literally fulfilled, but it also is true that a mistake of this kind is just what Jesus is least likely to fall into. Jesus is not accustomed to misapply passages which have a spiritual meaning in a literal way, but, on the contrary, he is more likely to pierce down to the spiritual meaning of literal words ; and on account of this we seldom are justified in taking the baldly literal meaning of Jesus' sayings unless we find that a deeper meaning is forced and unnatural. But here, if once we admit that Jesus intends a quotation, there is no difficulty in the least. Jesus does not say to John, Look at the miracles which I do, and divine my spiritual rank from them ; but what he says is this : I cannot answer your question directly, because to you and to me the question does not mean the same. I only can point you to the place where you will find what my conception of the coming one is, and ask you to look for the fulfilling of that prophecy in my life. If to you the Messiah is one who comes to heal

the spiritual ills of men, to make the Gospel of divine truth the common property of all, yes, I am the Messiah ; and blessed is he whosoever shall find none occasion of stumbling in me. And there are a number of things which go to show that this interpretation is the right one. The closing sentence of Jesus' words indicates that the proof which he had offered was not one which he had much hope would appeal to men, but which was more like to put a stumbling-block in their way ; and this was not true of the proof from miracles, which is frankly and without disguise a popular appeal. Moreover, a reference to miracles would be no real answer to John's question. If miracles had been performed John must have felt all their force before he sent to Jesus ; and if he still were in doubt, what would be gained by sending back word to him, Look to the miracles ? Was this really the strongest proof that Jesus had to offer ? And a closer examination of the words themselves will point to the same thing : " the dead are raised up, the poor have good tidings preached to them." "*The poor have good tidings preached to them.*" Jesus' teaching is not to be got rid of altogether then ; but in this case it comes in in a secondary way, as an afterthought. Moreover, it destroys the unity of the saying ; the last clause brings in something which is entirely out of harmony with the rest of the sentence, an argument of a totally different kind. And yet there is no indication that the train of thought has been shifted, and from the structure of the sentence one never would suspect the presence of a double line of argument. If, therefore, one clause can refer to nothing else than Jesus' spiritual ministry, and if the rest of the sentence may be interpreted in more ways than one, the part which is unequivocal ought to be allowed the

casting vote. The figurative meaning is then, we think, by far the more natural meaning; but, it is said, John would not have understood it in this way. Undoubtedly he would not have understood it so if he had known of remarkable cures on Jesus' part which were thought to be miraculous and to which he could apply the words; but if he had not known of these he could not have understood it otherwise. But the cures of Jesus are just what we have to establish; till they are established we can only take the words in the most probable way. And taking them in this way, they exclude the cures.

And for this conclusion the words of Jesus to the Pharisees when they asked him for a sign tell very strongly indeed. "An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign, and there shall no sign be given it but the sign of Jonah the prophet. The men of Nineveh shall stand up in the judgment with this generation and shall condemn it; for they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and behold a greater than Jonah is here." The first Evangelist understands this as a reference to the resurrection, but there can be no doubt that he is mistaken; Jesus explains it himself, and explains it of his teaching. Let us notice carefully what Jesus says: he rebukes an anxiety for miraculous signs as belonging to an evil and adulterous generation, he declares absolutely that no sign shall be given to it, and he appeals wholly to the truth and the self-evidential nature of his preaching. If the Pharisees had known about the miracles of healing, how could they still have asked for a sign? they had a sign already, and then too a knowledge of Jesus' power must have made them hesitate to provoke a display of it which should be to their own disadvantage. If Jesus had

performed cures which he thought were miraculous, and had appealed to them as his authority, how could he have spoken of signs as he does speak of them? The whole passage is an unequivocal denial of the miraculous in Jesus' life; and because it goes clean against the tendencies which were working in tradition, and because it has besides all the antecedent probabilities in its favor, it is worth much more as evidence than any saying on the other side could be. And along with this we may notice the fact that the people were so slow in thinking of Jesus as the Messiah. If Jesus had engaged in an extended ministry of healing which was thought to be miraculous, and if he himself had appealed to these miracles, this fact is very difficult to explain.

Among the other sayings of Jesus whose authenticity cannot fairly be questioned, there is only one, apart from the narratives of special cures, which seems to claim a miraculous power, and this is the Woe against the Galilean cities. Here again probably it would be hypercritical to deny that by "mighty works" the Evangelists thought that miracles were meant, and it may be that the word itself can mean nothing less than this. And yet there are two great objections against understanding the saying in this way; it implies what in other words of his Jesus seems expressly to exclude, and it places the people's guilt in their rejection of his miracles and not in the rejection of his teaching, which is utterly opposed to what we know of Jesus. In another place where Jesus is referring to this same thing, to his rejection by the people, he speaks simply of his teaching ministry: "We have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets," he represents the people as saying, while of miracles he



gives no hint. It is true that in Matthew, in this same passage, there is a direct allusion to miracles, and this shows how easily such an allusion could be brought into Jesus' words, when it did not at all belong there. For that we have the genuine form in Luke and not in Matthew will appear when we notice that in Luke Jesus' words are addressed to his unbelieving countrymen, which must be the meaning of the passage, while Matthew refers them to unfaithful Christians, Christians who prophesied in Jesus' name, and cast out demons, and did many wonderful works, but who yet were workers of lawlessness,—a phenomenon which belongs not to Jesus' day, but to the times when the Evangelist wrote. We think then that Jesus can only be referring in general to his ministry, and to the power of God which had been manifested through him, and not to wonderful cures which he had wrought. Even if *δύναμις* can hardly mean this, yet we have no evidence as to just what word it was that Jesus used, particularly if we have to do with a translation. At any rate either this saying or the saying about a sign has to be turned from its more obvious meaning, and we do not hesitate to say that here the difficulty in doing this is vastly less.

We now have examined those sayings which seem to us to be from Jesus and which have a bearing on the question; but there still remain a number besides which cannot be received with so much confidence. One of these, which is present in the charge to the Twelve, we shall have to examine with some thoroughness at a later point, and so to save repetition we will pass it by for the time being, and turn to the others. And we should like to anticipate here a criticism which no doubt will be made, that it is easy enough to prove



a point when one is at liberty to explain away all the evidence on the other side. But because a point can only be established after opposing evidence is tested and rejected, this need not give rise to any presumption against its being true; and it is a cheap triumph to dismiss it with the words "explained away." As a matter of fact it is the very nature of human testimony that it should be conflicting, and a great part of the critic's duty is to find out, if he can, what part of the evidence cannot be relied on. That there always will be much which cannot be relied on we have to expect, and there is nothing which would lead us not to look for it in the Gospels also. Now here we have tried to show a probability that Jesus did not believe himself to have worked miraculous cures. In so far as this has been established, opposing evidence must be looked on with suspicion, and if other good grounds for doubting it are found, it may reasonably be rejected. And to start in with, it must be noted that these sayings do not go back, as the others did, to the earlier tradition, but are due to Mark or else to Luke, and this greatly weakens the external witness in their favor. The instances in Luke may be taken first, and here in every case the connection which is given to the saying is particularly doubtful. The first case is found in the story of Jesus' visit to Nazareth, and against this story there are decided objections. In Mark there is an earlier account of a rejection at Nazareth, and with this Luke's account does not very well agree; and while of course there is nothing against two visits to the place, two rejections are hardly to be thought of. Moreover, any attempt to make two different events out of the different versions is opposed by the fact that nearly all of Mark has been worked by Luke into his

own narrative. We say "worked in," because the elements seem more original by far in Mark. In Luke the sceptical question which the neighbors ask comes in very abruptly, after a sentence which gives just the opposite impression, that Jesus' words had aroused their admiration; Mark, however, has already led up to this question. And again the proverb which Jesus puts to them is introduced by Mark after the rejection has taken place, while in Luke it seems a rather ungracious anticipation of this rejection. And besides this there is the fact which, as will be seen later, is very improbable, that Jesus openly proclaims himself as the Messiah; there is the saying of Jesus, "Physician, heal thyself," whose meaning in this connection never has been settled; and there is the miracle at the end, which is the more improbable as Mark knows nothing of any violence offered to Jesus. The whole narrative then appears to have grown out of the earlier form in Mark, and to have reached its present shape mainly through a desire to have a frontispiece which should exhibit in miniature the later and national rejection by the Jews. So if the saying about Elijah and Elisha was really spoken by Jesus, as is not impossible, at least it was not spoken in this connection, and consequently there is not the slightest thing to show that it referred to miracles. Nor indeed in this connection even is such a reference necessary. And the other two cases to be found in Luke are quite as doubtful. In one of these, when the Pharisees warn Jesus against Herod, the greater part of Jesus' answer is taken from an entirely different connection in the discourse against the Pharisees, and this is shown by the fact that the closing words addressed to Jerusalem, "Ye shall not see me henceforth," are obviously inappropriate when

Jesus had just declared that he was on the way to Jerusalem. We cannot therefore rest with any confidence on the few words which still remain, for they have no special guarantee of genuineness, and the way in which Jesus makes his ministry consist in nothing else but healing is decidedly improbable. The other case is where the disciples come back from their mission and tell Jesus of the cures they have wrought. The legendary character of Jesus' answer is strongly marked in one part of it, where he gives his followers authority to tread on serpents and escape all hurt; but the great objection to the incident is the fact that it does not agree with the narrative to which Luke joins it, and which of necessity it implies. In that narrative Jesus authorizes the disciples whom he is sending out to cast out demons, but here the power over demons appears as something unexpected. Luke himself notices this hitch in the connection, and so he leaves all reference to the demons out of Jesus' charge. And to make assurance doubly sure, even if the incident could be shown to belong to this connection, that very fact, as we shall show in another place, would be fatal to it.

After Luke it would be in order next to take the instances in Mark, but because these are so closely connected with the larger question as to the general credibility of Mark's additions, we shall pass them by for the moment, content with the main results which we have reached. It is to be remembered that at best Jesus' words only establish the existence of strange cures effected by him, and not that these cures were miracles; and it would be easier to think that Jesus was mistaken than, simply to save his authority, to suppose the miracles were real ones. But we have tried to

show that of the sayings which bear upon the question, after we have thrown out those whose genuineness is so doubtful that as evidence they can count for nothing, there is one which denies distinctly any connection on Jesus' part with miraculous signs, and there is only one which can fairly be used to prove the contrary, and that this is open to another meaning. When therefore we turn to the stories themselves which we have in the Gospels, there is, we think, a certain presumption against their being true. At least we may expect to find a large admixture of legend, for it would be strange indeed if, when the nature-miracles have so much of legend in them, none should be present in the cures as well. Nevertheless there are certain of the cures which seem to have special marks of genuineness which the nature-miracles do not have, and these are the ones which we shall examine first. The most prominent of these are the Sabbath cures, and these apparently are four in number. But this list has carefully to be sifted, and we have shown already how three of them depend upon a single story which was present in the source. And now the words of Jesus, which Matthew and Luke both have retained, the illustration of a sheep fallen into a pit, without doubt are genuine. But in how far does this saying make the miracle necessary? If we compare Matthew and Luke we find that the account originally opened with a question, about which both Evangelists agree, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath day?"; only Luke gives this question to Jesus, while Matthew attributes it to the Pharisees. And Matthew here has the probabilities in his favor, for such questions often were put to Jesus by the Pharisees, while Jesus knew very well what the Pharisees believed about it. Luke's change, besides,

can be explained by comparing him with Mark, for Mark too has a very similar question put in Jesus' mouth. But as soon as we admit this, at once it becomes probable that we have to do, not with a miracle at all, but only with a theoretical question, like the question about the great commandment or about divorce, by which the Pharisees constantly were trying to entrap Jesus. It is not likely, as Matthew represents, that the Pharisees would have asked the question to lead Jesus into a real violation of the law, for if the cure had seemed to be miraculous of course it would have put them to confusion; nor is it likely that in the presence of a miracle the Pharisees would have ventured to make any objection. And the nature of the cure itself bears this out, for the withered hand and the command of Jesus point clearly to the Old Testament story of Jeroboam. At first then, we must think, there was only a question which was put to Jesus, and which he answered in this way; but afterwards it was supposed that Jesus pointed his moral with an actual cure, and so, following a story in the Old Testament, the miracle crept into the narrative. How, as the Gospel literature grew, other accounts, slightly differing, arose out of this, it still is possible to trace. And in the meanwhile in a different field, tradition had taken still another turn, and as a result we have the story of the woman bowed together. In itself this story is suspicious, for, not to insist upon its late appearance, the bearing of the ruler of the synagogue in the presence of a miracle is far from being probable, and the correspondence between the cure and the illustration is too ingenious to be natural. But what is fatal to it is its evident resemblance to the other story; and since it imitates this, not only in the illustration which it puts



in Jesus' mouth, but also in the later addition of a miracle, it cannot be allowed any authority.

And in the other case where a saying of Jesus is closely connected with a cure, the case of the palsied man, in spite of the confidence with which the genuineness of the saying has been said to be self-evident, we cannot think that this is so. "Who is this that forgiveth sins also?" say the Pharisees; and Jesus answers, "Whether is easier, to say Thy sins are forgiven; or to say Arise and walk? But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins,—Arise, and take up thy bed, and go unto thy house." Let us notice that here the cure is only a secondary thing, performed just to let the Pharisees know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins. This is the motive of the whole narrative; the claim is not forced from Jesus, but he expressly leads to it. Now who is it likely would have been most anxious to prove the authority of Jesus to forgive sins, and would have thought that this was established satisfactorily by a miracle, Jesus himself, or a disciple who was occupied with theories about Jesus' person and authority? We think that there can be but one answer to the question. And as an incident in Jesus' life there are two strong objections to this story: it goes upon a view which we know is a mistaken view, and which a man of Jesus' spiritual insight is not likely to have held, that sickness is sent as a punishment for sin, and it contradicts other facts in Jesus' life. We shall find that Jesus in his public life carefully avoided any direct claim to be the Messiah, and that his Messiahship for a long time was not suspected. But this claim which Jesus makes without any provocation really involves a claim to be Messiah, and it is



hard to understand how the Pharisees could have avoided seeing it.

And now let us take another narrative which it has been thought makes a miracle by Jesus necessary, and which we agree has a strong appearance of being genuine, the narrative of the Syro-Phœnician woman. It may make the matter plainer to reproduce the story in full as it is given in Matthew.

“And Jesus went out thence, and withdrew into the parts of Tyre and Sidon. And behold, a Canaanitish woman came out from those borders, and cried, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou son of David ; my daughter is grievously vexed with a demon. But he answered her not a word. And his disciples came and besought him, saying, Send her away ; for she crieth after us. But he answered and said, I was not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel. But she came and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me. And he answered and said, It is not meet to take the children’s bread and cast it to the dogs. But she said, Yea, Lord : for even the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters’ table. Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith : be it done unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was healed from that hour.”

Now in the first place, a part of this story, the words of the disciples and Jesus’ answer to them, is not found in Mark ; was it originally a part of the narrative ? A majority of critics have said that it does belong to the original story, but in spite of this we have no hesitation in answering the other way. We will not argue that these words of Jesus are opposed to Jesus’ own point of view, for this is something that we have still to prove ; we only point out their connection with an-

other sentence which is attributed to Jesus. "Go not into any way of the Gentiles, and enter not into any city of the Samaritans : but go rather *to the lost sheep of the house of Israel*,"—here we have the same phrase and the same point of view. In the case of every other saying in the Gospels which is found in two or more connections, there is reason to believe that only one of these connections is a true one, and here therefore it is probable that we have no exception. And we actually find that while in the instructions to the disciples the phrase is closely bound up with the context, in the case of the miracle the phrase is brought in quite violently. In Mark's account the woman comes to Jesus and makes her request, and this is what naturally she would do. But in Matthew she follows Jesus for some distance, shouting aloud to him, which is much less likely. And even in Matthew, after the object of this strange proceeding is accomplished and Jesus has been given an opportunity to utter the saying which has been put into his mouth, the woman comes at once to Jesus and makes her request in a reasonable way, just as she does in Mark. Mark's account then, we think, is the original account ; and in this form it seems at first, as we have already admitted, somewhat violent to deny its genuineness. Indeed, we should like to believe that so charming a story in the main was true, and we should be inclined to do so if it were not for one thing about it, the curious relation which it bears to another story in the Gospels, the story of the centurion's son. Just as soon as we get rid of the additions by Matthew we see that the parallelism is complete. Both are concerned with Gentiles ; then in one we have a father asking help for his son, in the other a mother for her daughter ; both centre about a clever saying

uttered by the suppliant, the only instances of the kind in the Gospels ; in both Jesus, contrary to his usual custom, commends highly the faith which is displayed ; in both he heals the sufferer at a distance, again the only instances of this ; both narratives close with the same words. If either of these narratives had stood alone we should have hesitated much before we doubted it, but with both of them together, without hesitation we must reject them both. That in the only two instances in which Jesus came in contact with a Gentile, the circumstances, unusual in themselves, should have been exactly the same, is almost impossible, so that we can only regard it as a clever attempt to picture, by two companion stories, the faith of the Gentiles carried back into Jesus' own life.

The narratives of healing for which the most can be said we have now considered, and have found reason to reject them all, without, we hope, using means that are too forced. And now the rest of the cures it becomes very hazardous to retain, particularly as in the most of them there are clear marks of legend. As an example we may take the raising of Jairus' daughter ; after we throw out Mark's additions and go back to the earliest account, we see how very slender the evidence for it is. A man asks Jesus to raise his dead daughter ; without demur Jesus goes to the house, quiets the mourners with an assurance that the death will only prove a sleep, and restores the girl to life. How can any one possibly maintain that this story blocks the way to a rejection of the miracles ? The story is found in a book whose author we do not know, and one hardly can ask for clearer marks of legend than it presents. The only thing which has been able to save it in the past has been the life-like details which Mark has

added, and these, as we have seen and shall see again, cannot be allowed the least authority. Again there is the healing of the epileptic boy : the very feature which seems to be the most genuine, the despondent words of Jesus, " How long shall I be with you ? how long shall I suffer you ? " show how little the narrative is to be depended on, when we notice how, coming after the descent from the Mount of Transfiguration, they point to the displeasure which Moses showed when he came down from the mountain, himself transfigured. But into further details we shall not go ; if we have convinced our readers in the cases which already we have examined we have said enough, and if we have not convinced them it is useless to say more.

We conclude then that for an extended healing ministry in Jesus' life, for anything, in fact, more than an influence over demoniacs, the evidence is very slight indeed. And with this also we rest the case against the miracles as a whole. We started by assuming that there must be a strong presumption against any narrative which professed to tell of a supernatural event, and that only the most unassailable evidence could serve to overcome this presumption. Such evidence we have not found, but, quite the contrary, we have found the evidence breaking down just where it seemed the strongest ; we constantly have come across the signs which ordinarily mark the presence of legend, and have been able in some cases to detect legend in its growth. Accordingly we hereafter shall consider ourselves justified in doing what elsewhere the critic does not hesitate to do without all this preliminary investigation, and shall regard a narrative, when it tells of the miraculous, as on the face of it in some sort of error. We have then one criterion which will aid most effectually

in answering the question which it will be convenient at this point to ask in regard to each of our three Gospels, What, in some approximate measure, is the degree of weight which ought to be assigned to a statement when it cannot be traced to the definite body of tradition which has been called the source? In the case of Matthew the answer to the question is very easy. The new matter which Matthew brings in is not only legendary, but it is flagrantly so. Angels interfere continually and as a matter of course in human affairs, mysterious stars appear to guide adoring magi to the infant King, men walk on the sea, coins are found in fishes' mouths, dead men rise and appear to many. And quite in the fashion of legend, too, though without the miracle, is the direct prophecy to Judas, the washing of Pilate's hands and his wife's dream, the fearful end of the traitor, and the guard at the tomb. In one or two cases when a new fact is introduced, the writer himself shows us what authority he had by joining an Old Testament prophecy to it. Indeed the very fact that the Evangelist has so little that is new shows that he had no original source of information. When he wants two stories to fill out a group of miracles, he does not hunt for new ones, but in a slightly mutilated form he uses two which he had before him in his source, and which he afterwards proceeds to bring in again in their proper places.<sup>1</sup> In Luke again, while the answer cannot be given as absolutely as in the case of the first Gospel, yet on the whole the same decision must be come to, that Luke's authorities, when he leaves his two main sources, are not very reliable, and that his narratives at least have been a good deal

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<sup>1</sup> Mat. 9: 27-34.



demoralized in the process of transmission, even if they had any secure basis at the start. A number of the narratives already have had to be examined in various connections, or will have to be : the rejection at Nazareth, the call of the disciples, the anointing of Jesus in the Pharisee's house, the return of the seventy, the story of the woman bowed together and of the lepers, and the reply to the Pharisees' warning against Herod. Cases of the same sort with these are the two narratives of the centurion's servant and of the widow's son at Nain. The first is a further development of a story which has been shown to be without foundation, and it is not a very happy development at that, for it takes the point from the centurion's words to make them only an after-thought, and to put them in the mouth of servants, while the motive for this is evident in a desire to increase the centurion's humility. And the second seems to be an imitation of the older raising of the dead, although it goes beyond this in the fact that Jesus makes the first move in the matter. A similar judgment must be passed upon the early chapters of the Gospel, which throughout are pervaded with the atmosphere of miracle. Quite as adverse must be the decision in the less numerous cases where a statement must be assigned to the author of the book himself, and not to some unknown source which he is using. How ready the author is to avail himself of the right of conjecture has appeared in several instances during the discussion of the Synoptic problem, and these are not the only ones. The most noticeable instance is the way in which he brings a considerable part of the material of his book into the last journey to Jerusalem, and creates besides a mission of seventy disciples in connection with this journey. Now in itself this cannot be



called likely, and indeed Luke finds the carrying out of his program a clumsy enough task. In the ninth chapter the time for Jesus' death is almost at hand, and he already has got as far as to Samaria, with his face stedfastly set towards Jerusalem ; and in the tenth and thirteenth chapters again he still is "on the way." But in the thirty-first verse of the thirteenth chapter he is back again in Galilee, and in the seventeenth chapter only has got to the Samaritan border. Moreover Jesus sends out thirty-five pairs of disciples in whose footsteps he is to follow, a formidable task at best, one might think, for a single man. But instead of starting off at once to do this, though already he has begun his journey to Jerusalem and the days are well-nigh come that he should be received up, all the seventy have returned before he makes another step ; and yet from Jesus' charge to them we should suppose that he anticipated a somewhat lengthy absence. But it is needless to dwell upon these difficulties, when we notice the material out of which Luke has constructed his account. For the most part he has taken a great section bodily from his source, but in the source this section was nothing but a group of disconnected incidents, and Luke's disposal of it is only a curiously infelicitous instance of the way in which he constantly tries to force his two authorities into the same chronological scheme. The charge to the Seventy, again, is precisely the charge which in Matthew is given to the Twelve, and we need better authority than Luke can give us before two separate events can be admitted. As a matter of fact Luke seems to have made the same mistake here which he makes once again in the case of the Sabbath cure. In the source the charge probably was given to "disciples," for the source had no account

of the calling of the Twelve. But Mark in his abridged account limited it to the Twelve, and in this Matthew followed him. Luke, however, because he found a short account in Mark and a longer one in the source, got the idea that they referred to different events, and it only was left for him to discover that the "disciples" were seventy in number, and so symbolized the mission to the nations. This is perhaps the most striking instance which will be found in the book, but somewhat similar cases in which an unfortunate setting is given to an incident are not infrequent. Such a case is the supposition that the woes against the Pharisees were spoken at table, and were directed towards the host himself, because he had expressed surprise that Jesus' disciples were not following the ordinary custom. Such an occasion lowers Jesus' matchless oratory into a mere tirade, which does not even keep to the bounds which common politeness would prescribe. Something more than this was needed to raise Jesus to such a fierce heat of indignation, and the whole situation seems only to have been suggested by the figure of the cup and platter, which was wholly innocent of any such a literal side-reference. A very similar case occurs in the fourteenth chapter, where a whole list of incidents are strung together as table-talk at a Pharisee's house. There is a possibility that the saying about Sabbath healing, before it was turned into a miracle, had such a setting, though the Pharisees who were interested to lead Jesus into a trap were not the most likely to show hospitality to him ; but the parable of the supper, as its connection in Matthew and its own internal character show, does not belong here, and the discourse about the chief seat loses all its force, and becomes only a more subtle and

effective minister to pride, when it is turned into directions literally to be observed.

There still remain a considerable number of discourses which are peculiar to the third Gospel, as well as a few historical allusions by which Luke's accuracy may be tested, and these will be referred to in their proper place. But of the historical matter a pretty large share has now been mentioned, enough to enable us to draw the same conclusion which was drawn in the case of Matthew, that the Evangelist is not an original authority, and by himself furnishes no guarantee that he has got at the true facts of the case, though no doubt he does the best he can, and has no thought of creating wrong impressions. When we turn to Mark, however, a case presents itself which in a considerable degree differs from anything which we have come across in the other Gospels, and which cannot be settled in exactly the same way. Matthew and Luke do indeed treat their sources with great freedom, and yet on the whole they evidently do not intend to give anything more than what actually lies before them, with such explanatory notes as they think will make things plainer to their readers. They have apparently no special ambition to add embellishments of their own, and what they do add is mostly in the nature of conjecture, suggested in the larger number of cases by something in the narrative itself. In Mark, however, this explanation will not suffice, for Mark is all the time bringing details for which there is no justification in the context. Moreover the greater part of Mark's new matter, alike the stories which are wholly new, and the amplifying details, are so thoroughly of a piece, and so related to the general design of the book, that we hardly can suppose that he has got them from

oral tradition or from another written source ; so that we are left to face the dilemma either of invention, with perhaps in most cases some hint come by through tradition as a starting-point, or else of a particularly wide and close acquaintance with the actual facts. And in favor of this last alternative there can be brought forward the undoubted vividness and life-likeness of Mark's additions, which have led an influential school of modern critics to look on Mark as representing a very old stratum of tradition indeed. Nevertheless we are obliged to reject this decisively. We have already given reasons for thinking it impossible that the author of the book should have got his facts direct from eye-witnesses of Jesus' life, and the more carefully the book is examined, the more this conclusion will approve itself. With all their verisimilitude, the narratives will not stand a careful scrutiny. Among the instances which were adduced in the first chapter, it will be remembered that there were four miracle-stories which appeared in a longer form in Mark, and we showed why, on critical grounds, we thought that Matthew's versions were to be preferred. And now, after the discussion of the miracles, we may add that the fact that it is to miracle-stories that the additions have been made, goes again to show that real reminiscences they cannot be. And yet they are to the full as admirable specimens of the art of story-telling as will be found anywhere in the book. And the story of the epileptic boy deserves a special mention. It is here that one of the sayings comes in which would point to a healing ministry on Jesus' part, if only it were genuine,—“ This kind goeth not out save by prayer.” That this is a part of Mark's additions is shown by its absence from the other Gos-

pels, and also by the fact that the preceding sentence which appears in Matthew, "The boy was healed from that hour," is a regular formula in the source to mark the end of a narrative of healing. The same objection also, that they tell of miracles, will condemn several other stories which are due to Mark entire. The cursing of the fig-tree and the walking on the sea have been discussed already, and besides these is the cure of blind Bartimæus, and the cures of a deaf man and a blind man in the seventh and eighth chapters. These, all of them, show Mark's dexterous touch most distinctly in the minuteness with which they enter into details, and the last two should be noticed in particular. These introduce a touch which is quite anomalous, and represent Jesus' cures as mediated through physical means. If we take these narratives seriously, and try to find an explanation for them, we shall only have our labor for our pains. Suppose we take the case of the blind man: Jesus spits on his eyes and effects a partial cure, and then a second application completes the process. But apart from the fact that this is an isolated case, why anyway should Jesus have used spittle? Of course, in no case could the spittle have done good, so what was to be gained by such a sham? If one says it was to increase the blind man's faith, this may mean either of two things. If it means that faith, or mental confidence, was the effective instrument of the cure, then at least it does away with the need of a miracle. But a faith cure in such a case is barely possible, and the confidence with which Jesus goes to work, as well as the success he meets with, is strange enough. If, however, one means faith in the higher sense, and supposes that this by-play was just to keep the mira-



cle from being morally unfruitful, then nothing is explained after all ; for it is not easy to see how a partial miracle caused by spittle would be likely to beget truer faith than a complete miracle effected by a word. In truth, the thing would be hard to solve on any terms, if it were not in Mark that it was found ; but if Mark has gone to work as we contend he has, then this is nothing but another example of the concrete, palpable, minute way, in which he loves to bring before himself every detail which will make an incident more real.

And another point against Mark's pictures is the way in which, to form them, he brings details together out of his written sources. Nearly all of his discourses he has made up in this way, by joining passages together which seemed to afford a pretty good connection ; and sometimes in his history he has followed the same plan. The best example of this is in the sketch with which he opens Jesus' ministry. We have shown already how Jesus' words are borrowed from the Baptist, how the miracle in the synagogue is taken from another connection, how the phraseology depends continually upon the source. With what confidence can we rely upon such a piece of patchwork, however cleverly it is put together, as a true account ? or what likelihood is there that an author who was forced to use such methods had rich stores of good information within his reach ? And there is, besides, against this sketch, the fact that it makes Jesus start in at once on a general healing ministry, and the fact that it has a wrong idea of what the real nature of Jesus' teaching was. No doubt it adds to the picturesqueness of the scene, and gives an incisiveness to the delineation, to represent Jesus as



starting on his work with so much vim, rushing from town to town, with time only for a day in the largest. But as a real fact Jesus was not in such a hurry as this, and if he had been it would have played havoc with all his plans. Even if his thought had been just to put himself before the people as Messiah, he could not have gained this by a hurried proclamation simply ; but really his aims were far deeper than this, as we shall see, and could be carried out only by patient and continued effort. And another case may be noticed in this connection, because it has a saying that refers to miracles connected with it. In the ninth chapter there are two incidents related, the dispute about precedence and the account of a man who cast out demons in Jesus' name, and there is, besides, a long discourse joined with them. But the parts of this discourse—almost all of them—are taken out of other connections ; there is another dispute about precedence where the accompanying discourse is far more genuine ; and Jesus' reply to John's complaint is only a transformation of a better attested saying, " He that is not for us is against us " : so that there really remains nothing, except possibly one aphorism by Jesus, upon which one can lay his hand securely as a token of real knowledge.

And one other strong indication against the reliability of Mark's statements still remains in the fact that a good share of them are connected more or less closely with the dramatic framework in which Jesus' life is set. We have noticed some of the elements of this already, and now that, along with the paucity of new information in other directions, Mark should yet have possessed such an abundance of reliable intelligence on a very few unimportant points, for instance that he should have had such graphic knowledge of the crowds

about Jesus and the sick people who were healed on so many different occasions, passes credence, and is a clear indication of the way in which these picturesque details should be received. The repeated prophecies of coming death, largely in the same words, are another instance of the sort, and so too are the numerous notices which centre about Mark's idea of Jesus' Messiahship and its acknowledgment. This last may be noticed because it accounts for a fact which often has been brought up as proof for the reality of the miracles, that Jesus sometimes forbids the miracle to be reported. The truth however seems to be that this is due to Mark, who, with his conception of Jesus' Messiahship as hidden from the people by reason of their unbelief, makes use of it, now to keep demons from making known the fact, and now to restrict the spread of some particularly marvellous deed of power. It may be thought that also it is meant to serve for heightening the impression of Jesus' popularity, for there often is joined to it a notice that it proved of no avail, and that the crowds only thronged about Jesus the more. But apart from these more patent cases, two other instances, less obvious, may be pointed out in which the author's desire to give dramatic movement to his story has dominated the use of his material. One is the way in which he depicts the growth of the hostility against Jesus, and more particularly two incidents which he gives with this aim in view. In the third chapter he tells how the enmity of the Pharisees reaches such a height that they resolve to make away with Jesus, if it lies within their power ; and for this purpose they even are ready to join hands with the Herodians. How much reliance can be placed upon this very definite statement will appear from the fact

that the occasion for it is found in the healing on the Sabbath day, and we have seen that this cure never occurred at all. Mark then clearly in this place has transformed a miracle which he found before him, to adapt it better to his purpose, and then has made it a marked point in the drama which he is constructing and has connected a definite statement with it, entirely, it would seem, under the guidance of his own sense of fitness. And closely connected with this there is another incident which is even more elaborate, the incident on the lake when the disciples forget to take bread. The saying about leaven, which the other Evangelists misunderstand, has, as Mark shows, a direct reference back to this same statement which is made in connection with the Sabbath healing. But if the motive for the incident is swept away, then it is dangerous of course to hold on to the incident itself, and not less dangerous when we notice how gross the disciples' mistake is for a real mistake, and how the story goes on to imply the two miracles of feeding, which are in the last degree doubtful. Again therefore we are led back to the same explanation, which we might indeed hesitate to apply if there were not so many other cases which called for it as well, that Mark has not scrupled to construct a story when he needed it to give completeness to his picture.

And this appears again in a way which perhaps is still more striking. We have seen already that Luke's account of the visit to Nazareth is not to be depended on, and for that matter hardly more is Mark's account. We do not mean to doubt the fact that Jesus failed to find belief among his fellow-townsmen, which may all be true, but only to doubt whether Mark had any sufficient information on which to base his narrative. This

must be considered improbable, because for one thing his story is filled so with the presupposition of the miracles, although the fact of a rejection he may possibly have had to go on. What, however, we are after is not to disprove this narrative so much as to point out again the dramatic completeness which is characteristic of Mark. "A prophet is not without honor, save in his own country, and among his own kin, and in his own house," is a proverbial saying which may or may not have been spoken by Jesus, but which at least is of special interest to Mark. For this narrative is only the climax of a series, and already he has shown how Jesus suffered from unbelief among his own kinsmen, and in his own house, in the third chapter of his book. These incidents have played some part in the theories of German critics, and curious results have been the outcome of them; yet they will not stand a searching criticism. Jesus, we are told, returns home, and at once has such a crowd about him that he gets no chance so much as to eat. His kinsmen thereupon give it out that he is beside himself, and it is this which suggests to the Pharisees a way of accounting for Jesus' cures. Then Jesus' mother and brethren appear on the scene and try in vain to get at him through the crowd, and this is connected closely with the accusation of insanity. Jesus resents their interference, and rebukes them. Now here again there is the suspicious fact that the whole story is one of Mark's numerous attempts to picture graphically the great popularity of Jesus, and the enormous crowds which thronged about him, and there is nothing to show that he had any historical warrant for this in the matter of definite details. And then again the accusation by the Pharisees, which is taken from Mark's source, really arose in an en-

tirely different way, and there is not the least probability in connecting it with anything that Jesus' kinsmen may have said. On the contrary, the charge made by the Pharisees seems to have been what suggested this other charge to Mark. And furthermore it is only by shutting one's eyes resolutely to the context that one can refuse to see a sharp rebuke in Jesus' words, and such a rebuke directed to his mother we should be a little loth to admit. But the whole thing gives no difficulty if we will recognize what we have tried to show by cumulative proof, that Mark in his descriptions has let his imagination have full play. Certainly where legend works at all, as legend certainly does work in the Gospels, imagination continually must come in, and it is no harder to admit that it comes in at this particular point, than that to some one else was due the details which the Gospel writer simply copied as he found them.

And where then, some may ask in real perplexity, are we to find the materials which will help us to make out the true story of Jesus' life, if his biographers are not to be depended on, and if legend throws a dark mist over everything which we would fain look to for light. Now we are not responsible for the facts in the case. We should rejoice as much as any one if there were full and unmistakable knowledge which would bring before us every phase of Jesus' life. But if the knowledge is not there, it will not better things to pretend we have it, and to refuse to give up any scrap of information after its baselessness has appeared, just because we have nothing else to take its place. It is true that a large part, yes, a very large part indeed of all we seemed to know about Jesus has crumbled away, and it naturally is with regret that we see it fall. But

fall it must, and all we can do is to go cheerfully to work, and see if enough is not still left to restore the picture, which seems on the point of fading away, to something of its former brightness, perhaps to a glory that shall eclipse the old. It is to this task that we shall now address ourselves.









## *PART II.—THE LIFE AND TEACHINGS OF JESUS.*

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### CHAPTER I.

#### THE PREPARATION.

THE early life of Jesus is wrapped in an obscurity which we can never hope will grow any less dark and impenetrable than it is at the present. Apart from what we can say of any Jewish child, and from a few guesses to which later events give a certain probability, there are barely two or three facts about him which dimly can be descried in the shadowy background by which poetic legend and religious faith have striven with loving pains to fill up the broken outlines of the Master's life. For any hope that out of the stories in the early chapters of the Gospels, beautiful as some of them undoubtedly are, anything of value can be disentangled for the real history of Jesus' life, will end in disappointment. It would be a waste of time for us to criticise the narratives at length, because one's bearing towards them is determined already by his bearing towards the Gospels as a whole. They are in the latest stratum of the Gospel literature, and by

themselves they furnish no weapon for their own defence. If the other parts of the Gospels, and so the miraculous in general, once were firmly established, then the stories of the early life might be allowed to stand under their protection ; but failing this they have nothing that can be said for them.

According to the Gospels Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judæa, the city of David ; but this statement is bound up so closely with the assumption that it was in Bethlehem that the Messiah must be born, that it loses a great share of its value. It is more likely that Nazareth in Galilee is to be assigned the honor, for at least it was at Nazareth that Jesus spent his early life. Joseph, his father, is usually agreed to have been a carpenter ; and while in reality it is Jesus who is called the carpenter in the more original account, and while this account itself is not a very early or reliable one, yet the statement may be allowed to stand. The tradition that Jesus was of the family of David is rather more uncertain, because it has so evident a motive in his Messiahship ; but since it was accepted by men like Paul, who had an opportunity to know the truth, it may after all be thought to be not unlikely. More doubtful still is the time of Jesus' birth. As two independent traditions put it in the reign of Herod we perhaps may accept this as having some real basis, but any attempt to fix the date more closely, by relying on apocryphal stars or even upon such definite statements as are made by Luke, will only be a waste of ingenuity. For if in the rest of the book Luke shows that he has no independent knowledge of Jesus' ministry, it is unlikely, when he goes still further back, that his calculations of chronology can be relied on ; and the desperate methods which have to be employed to free

him from the charge of proven error do not prepossess one in his favor. We must be content to say we do not know.

Fancy will always love to dwell with the boy Jesus on the slopes of the Galilean hills, and watch the unfolding of that mind and character which were to work such a mighty revolution in the world of thought and action. A quiet boy he must have been, a little shy perhaps, full of genuine human sympathy and with a heart quickly touched, a genial friend and comrade, but fond, too, of the fields and watercourses, where he could muse without hindrance over Israel's great past and greater future and over Israel's God, and have quiet and free play for the struggling thoughts and emotions which came thronging to his brain. Then there was the home teaching in the Law to occupy him, and the synagogue worship, with its sacred associations, and talks with neighbors and acquaintances, perhaps, from time to time, with some pious lawyer or Pharisee, about the Law and the hope of Israel. And most of all there was the Book of the Law itself, and all the treasures of sacred psalm and story and prophecy, over which Jesus had pored till he had mastered the fulness of the revelation which it had to give. To the Law and to Jesus' own supreme genius and insight, all that is most characteristic in his after-teaching seems to have been due. No doubt, with his keen vision for the things and the men about him, he made himself familiar with all the phases of religious life and thought which were influencing his countrymen, but no one phase predominates over the rest, so that we can say, without hesitation, This was taken from such and such a source. Jesus is no Pharisee or Essene; the liberalism of Alexandria is not Jesus' lib-

eralism. What is good he takes from any source, but all has been so fused together and transformed by his own genius that it becomes a new thing in the process.

It could not be long before Jesus would begin vaguely to feel that from those about him he already had got the most they had to give him. For Judaism there was one sufficient answer to all religious questions, and that answer was—Authority. It is one of the most striking elements of Jesus' genius that, in the midst of this stagnation of the human mind, when thought was chained to the petty treadmill of logical and grammatical inference, he yet was forced to ask the question—Why? And what had Judaism in the way of answer? Because it is written, because the Elders have said, because this is Rabbi So-and-so's opinion,—all most excellent reasons to the ordinary Jew, but not the sort of thing to satisfy Jesus. Something better he must have than this, something to bring him closer into the presence of the God and Father who every day was becoming more to him, something worthy of God and of the manhood to which God revealed himself. More and more Jesus would find that he was forced back upon his own thinking, and upon the book in which already he had found something of the freedom which Judaism so signally was lacking in ; and with the book open before him, and an eye keen to catch every gleam of what was kindred to his own half-conscious cravings, the religious heroes of his boyhood could not fail before much time had passed to lose a good deal of the glamour which still surrounded them in the eyes of the people as a whole. And in truth they were not very heroic figures when one had got used to the glare of their somewhat pretentious piety, and recovered himself a little from the first shock of awe. Was it, after

all, the highest duty of man to wash his hands before meals, and keep from eating eggs laid on the Sabbath? Had God thundered on Sinai and led his children through fightings and perils of every kind just for this, that they should spend their lives in avoiding the touch of half of God's creation, and then in purifying themselves when their painstaking had been without avail? Was God no more than a particularly strict Rabbi, on a larger scale, and man no better than a useless drudge, a slave to a code of rules which led nowhere and which had no meaning to any one? No; to Jesus, as to all the nobler spirits in the nation, it must appear that men were meant for far greater things than this; but while others were content to let the two conceptions stand side by side, Jesus must needs ask himself what their relation was. And Jesus was no more satisfied with the popular and patriotic ideal. The need of his people stood before him as a very patent fact, and it met a quick response in his large human sympathy. But could this need be met, as the zealots of his people whispered, by throwing off the Roman yoke and proclaiming the independence of the nation? and would it be much different if a conqueror should come from on high with supernatural power, and set up, not a kingdom founded on the right relation of the individual man to God, which Jesus' own experience was leading him to see was after all the source of the truest blessedness, but an external kingdom that never should be moved?

How long it took for Jesus to answer these questions, and to come to the position of calm certainty in which afterwards we find him, it is not possible for us to say. Probably the process was a gradual one, for Jesus was too profoundly sensitive to religion to throw



off lightly what came to him with the odor of sanctity clinging to it; and besides, the external influences which could help him were very few. But he did reach the answer, which is the main thing, and probably the matter already lay pretty clearly in his mind when the nation was startled by the announcement that a new prophet had arisen. A new prophet! it was this that for centuries now the pious Jew had been anxiously desiring and looking forward to,—a token that God's presence still was with the nation; and one can imagine the thrill which stirred every village where the news was told. And the hopes of the people were not disappointed. It is little enough that we can say of John to-day, and yet, even apart from Jesus' magnificent eulogy, the few words of his which have come down to us are sufficient to stamp him at once as a man of genuine and unmistakable power, one of the heroic type of mankind, on whom the eye of Jesus could well rest with genuine satisfaction, and whom he could hold up with something like scorn alongside the typical Galilean, fickle and unreliable, or the effeminate and luxurious Herodian courtier. Without originality in the highest sense, deficient in his range of vision and in his sympathies, not possessed of the catholicity and tolerance which indeed were hardly to be looked for in a Jew of his time, he yet was filled with such a terrible earnestness and such an overwhelming sense of the pre-eminent value of righteousness, that he would have been called great in any age. Indeed he was a true successor to the older and greater prophets, possessed, like them, of one supreme idea, and striking sledge-hammer blows in its behalf, utterly careless of the opposition and hatred he might draw upon himself. The degradation and hypocrisy of the

nation filled him with immeasurable disgust ; surely the promised presence of Jehovah could not be long delayed to do away utterly with such unworthiness. The lurid light of avenging fire and coming wrath fills his preaching. No fancied security from their father Abraham will serve them, nothing except repentance and righteousness. Already the axe is laid to the root of the trees, the time is short : repent, for the kingdom and its Messiah are at hand, not only with the blessings you are expecting, but with woes as well for those who are not prepared for him.

Naturally enough, the leaders of the nation did not greatly relish John's preaching. It was not pleasant to be told that they themselves had been so conspicuously a failure, and doubtless, too, John's insistence upon righteousness alone seemed to them dangerous, and not to recognize sufficiently the great duty of obedience to the Law, and its ritual. They had no sympathy with such heresy, and they called him a fanatic, a man with a demon. To the people, however, John's preaching appealed powerfully, and especially the more despised classes, the publicans and harlots, turned eagerly to him. Crowds flocked to hear him preach and to submit to the simple rite by which he tried to symbolize and drive hard home the change of life and purpose which he called for. But to one man the report of John's preaching had come with a special significance. It may be that Jesus already had reached the complete conception of what his life-work was to be, and yet it is quite possible that John's appearance furnished just the impetus which caused his purposes to crystallize and take on definite form. At last Jesus had come to see clearly what the gift was that God had in store for his people, and how wofully inade-

quate were the old ideals; and his heart bled for the men about him, who were groping blindly after what they never could attain, and what, if attained, would bring no satisfaction with it, while the true blessings lay right within their reach. And the fact that he was not alone, but that one other man at least within the nation had seen the same thing, even though less clearly than himself, and had dared to come out and speak the truth that he had seen, must have inspired him with fresh courage. And what of that other promise which John had made? Was it indeed true that God was about to visit his people, and that his chosen one was close at hand. And then, it may be in a flash of insight, or perhaps by slow degrees, the knowledge would come to him that he, who alone had experienced the full blessedness of the kingdom, and who alone saw wherein in truth it consisted, was by this very fact marked out as the Messiah, the one who should bring home to the nation the truth which he had realized in himself and which would place in their possession all the blessedness that God had promised.

It is an interesting question whether John ever recognized in Jesus the one whom he had come to announce. The view which is based upon the Fourth Gospel, that John had recognized Jesus and openly had testified to him, it will be necessary to give up, for in that case Jesus' Messiahship must early have been known among the people. It seems, too, definitely to be set aside by Jesus' own words, which speak of John as still outside the kingdom. There is indeed much to be said for the opposing view that it was only after his imprisonment that John came to think of Jesus in this light, and that the question which he sent from the prison shows the first dawning of belief. Perhaps

there is really not enough data for us to go upon, and yet to us it seems that this view hardly accounts for everything in the Gospels. It is in itself rather probable that Jesus should have been acquainted with John; it is not likely that the two men whose aims at bottom were the same should have kept wholly apart. Then we have, too, the evidence that Jesus took advantage of John's baptism to dedicate himself to the new work on which he had resolved. It is true that the narrative which tells of this cannot be accepted. This narrative seems to have been due more immediately to the passage which is quoted in the twelfth chapter of Matthew: "Behold my servant, whom I have chosen," runs Matthew's somewhat corrupt version, "my beloved, in whom my soul is well pleased. I will put my spirit upon him, and he shall declare judgment to the Gentiles." And accordingly, in the story of the baptism we read how the Spirit came upon Jesus at the opening of his ministry, and how a voice came from heaven, "Thou art *my beloved son*, in whom I *am well pleased*." Nevertheless, the fact itself is hardly to be rejected, because it is a fact of such a sort that tradition would be less likely to invent it than to take offence at it, as Matthew seems already to have done. Moreover, we find Jesus in several passages showing a somewhat intimate knowledge of the Baptist, and this would suggest that he had come into close contact with him. And the very form of the question which John asks, if it be genuine, implies a former acquaintanceship. If the thought had been a new one to John, he would have asked, "Art thou the coming one?" but he hardly would have added "or do we look for another?" These added words point to somewhat different circum-

stances, and the circumstances to which they point seem to us to be these. There is nothing to show that John, with all his profound sense of the necessity of conduct, was yet able to lift himself out of the atmosphere of externality which clung to the whole Jewish scheme of belief about divine things. His Messiah, for example, is a Messiah whose functions are inseparably connected with righteousness, and yet his influence is after all outward and supernatural. Sin is overthrown by destroying the sinner, righteousness is promoted by the setting up of the direct rule of God through his representative. The conception of God's relation to man as solely a spiritual thing within the man himself, John was not able to reach ; he was too impatient to wait for the kingdom of righteousness to come about by natural growth, but must have it established at one blow. It only can have been some such far-reaching difference as this between the two conceptions which Jesus had in mind when he spoke of John as still outside the kingdom, and, with all his magnificent achievement, less than the little ones who really had mastered the idea of Jesus. Now if Jesus had known John he must have talked with him about the kingdom and have tried to show John his own conception of it ; and his Messiahship, if he had spoken of it at all, he only could have spoken of hypothetically in this connection ; and perhaps even Jesus at that time, was not fully assured of his mission, and as yet had only a growing belief in it. If, then, we think of conversations in which Jesus' Messiahship, in connection with his new view of the kingdom, had been spoken of tentatively, and had been recognized as a possibility, John's question becomes somewhat more natural. Art thou, he asks of Jesus, the coming one, as



once we thought it possible of thee? or after all must we wait for another? And the answer which Jesus makes to John, this also becomes plain. If John was just rising to a belief in Jesus, the curt, enigmatical answer which Jesus sends back to him is not easily explained, for it seems calculated to check John's growing faith rather than to encourage it. But if the two already had talked the question over, if perhaps this very passage from Isaiah they had discussed together, Jesus' answer would be plain enough to John, and it would be all the answer that Jesus could give. And with all Jesus' praise of John we still seem to detect in his words a slight censure, as if John, with all his greatness, had not been able to rise to the spiritual conceptions of Jesus, even when the opportunity actually had come to him.

How long the ministry of John continued we are entirely unable to say; and between Josephus and the Gospels, the cause of his imprisonment is not quite certain. It seems most likely, however, that it was not until this last event that Jesus entered upon the real work of his ministry. For this we have the statement of the earliest source; and if later on the report actually got abroad that John had appeared again in the person of Jesus, this would point the same way, for if the two had carried on a public ministry together they must have been perfectly distinct in the popular mind. Just as little do we know the age of Jesus when he began his work, for Luke's statement that he was thirty years old has too manifest a foundation to be trustworthy. All we can say about it is that he was in the vigor of his powers, and that the conceptions upon which his preaching was based had already taken final and clearly defined shape. Before any attempt is made, however, to



formulate Jesus' teaching, a few words will have to be said about the principles which are to be followed in criticising the records of Jesus' sayings which are present in the Gospels. The great value of the Gospels lies in the sayings which they have preserved for us, and there cannot be the slightest doubt that a large number of these sayings are a very exact report of Jesus' own words. For the most part they supply their own evidence. The inexhaustible charm which they have, the combination of tenderness and vigor, the tireless play of fancy which brings before us by a single stroke the deepest spiritual truths in such a way that their truth is made self-evident, this is all something which is quite inimitable. But while this is true in the main of the Gospel discourses, yet it would be vain to expect it to be true everywhere. In the case of books which have arisen as our Gospels did, and which contain so much that is unreliable in their historical parts, it would be almost a miracle if we did not find a great deal attributed to Jesus which he never uttered, and we ought constantly to be on the lookout for this. And as a matter of fact, when one tries to formulate Jesus' teachings more exactly, he will come across very much indeed that will perplex him, and in nearly every case, in trying to determine what these teachings were, we will find evidence that is directly contradictory. And so long as the relation of the three Gospels to one another is left out of the account, it will hardly be possible for him to determine with any certainty what in many cases Jesus really said, for either he must assume uncritically that all of the sayings which the Gospels record are of equal genuineness, or he must attempt to distinguish between them in a way which at best will have to depend very much

upon conjecture. But if once we can determine whether these sayings stood in the source which our Evangelists used, or whether they got them in some less reliable way, then at least one great point will have been gained. Moreover where, as is the case more often than not, a saying has got into two or three different connections, the discovery of the original connection which it had will often throw a flood of light upon it ; and to determine this with some probability is not in the majority of cases a very difficult thing to do. For the most part it is Luke who has kept the connection best, while Matthew more frequently than Luke has woven the sayings into long discourses ; but of course this cannot be given as an unvarying rule, and it would not be safe to follow either blindly. As an example of the process which often must be gone through with, we may take the series of sayings which is found in the eleventh chapter of Luke, where the order is as follows : the dispute about casting out demons, the parable of the unclean spirit, the discourse about a sign, the sayings about the lamp under a bushel and about the sound eye. Matthew does not agree with this altogether. To begin with, he puts the parable of the unclean spirit after the demand for a sign, not after the dispute about casting out demons, and in this he seems to be right ; for while in Luke there is a connection of subject, in Matthew there is an inner connection in meaning which is much stronger. But what to do about the last two sayings one does not see so readily, for their connection in Luke is very forced, only an outer connection between lamp and light, and Matthew gives them both in surroundings which are wholly different. However, if the first of these, the saying about a lamp under a bushel,

we place as Matthew places it, at the opening of the Sermon on the Mount, the second one, the saying about the sound eye, comes in very naturally after the parable of the unclean spirit and the discourse about a sign. For here it is a rebuke to the people for their blindness, while in Matthew's connection it only can refer to the aims on which the heart is set, and this has no natural connection with the symbolism of the eye.

In the first place therefore we shall have to determine in what connection the saying originally stood. No doubt the process may often be a tedious one, and it would be much easier if we were able to dispense with the task altogether ; but to do this would only land us in greater difficulties, and the advantage of it we think will very quickly appear. But even if we can determine this, we still are not sure that we have Jesus' own words, for the Apostles may have transmitted them incorrectly, or they may have been added to at a very early period, before our three Gospels arose ; so that the task which it will be necessary to enter on is not an easy one. And no doubt to a very great extent the decisions which we come to must be subjective—that is, the critic must depend upon his own sense of what is likely, and in this there is large chance for error. But still his decision need not be arbitrary ; there are certain general principles which in nearly every case will serve to guide him. He has, to begin with, in a very large number of cases, two reports of the same saying, and a careful comparison of these will often prove exceedingly suggestive. As a simple illustration of this we may take the parable of the lost sheep, as it is found in Matthew and in Luke.

## IN MATTHEW.

How think ye? if any man have a hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and go into the mountains and seek that which goeth astray? And if so be that he find it, verily I say unto you, he rejoiceth over it more than over the ninety and nine which have not gone astray.

## IN LUKE.

What man of you having a hundred sheep, and having lost one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it? And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders rejoicing. And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and his neighbors, saying unto them, Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost. I say unto you that even so there shall be joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine righteous persons which need no repentance.

Now we see that this comparison of the one with the ninety and nine is in both accounts, and therefore it was in the source from which both drew. But while in Luke this is in the form of an explanation which is attached to the parable, and an explanation besides which in itself is somewhat questionable, in Matthew it is an integral part of the parable itself, and comes in with perfect naturalness, so that there can be little doubt that Matthew is nearest the original. And with this the other element in Luke will fall away as an addition, the calling together of the neighbors. And this after all only detracts from the naturalness of the parable, for it is not something which would be likely to happen in everyday life.

Now there are several principles which this comparison suggests, and they all of them may be put together under one general head, conformity to the style of Jesus. The argument from style no doubt is often a dangerous weapon to employ, but in the case of Jesus it is singularly effective, there scarcely ever has been a style more characteristic and more hard to imitate. It will be worth while to look at this somewhat closely in special connection with the parables. Whatever else may be true of Jesus' parables there are two things which we always may expect to find ; in the first place the illustration is exquisitely natural, it is taken from the actual life of the people or from nature, and in the second place it mirrors forth a spiritual truth, and usually a single truth, by a happy analogy. But very soon the parables came to be looked at as allegories, in which each detail had to have its special exposition. There is the parable of the sower, which shows the naturalness of the kingdom's origin and its dependence upon the laws of growth : Mark already had found in its picturesque touches, types of the various classes of Christians, the birds of the air became Satan, the thorns tribulations and sufferings ; and the first Evangelist follows him in the baldest of allegorical interpretations. Now it can be said positively that Jesus' parables were not allegories. An allegory is essentially artificial, while a parable is natural : it is a flash of insight which discovers an analogy between spiritual and material things. Why Jesus chose to speak in parables is a question which hardly would be raised if it had not been started first by Mark, who cannot be said however to have thrown much light upon it. Naturally we should suppose it was because a parable is an admirably vivid and effective way of presenting truth,

and because Jesus' mind naturally turned to figure rather than to abstract definition. But the Gospels have another explanation for it. It is not to the disciples that Jesus speaks in parables but only to the people, "because," says Matthew, "they are so blind they cannot understand anything else," "in order," Mark has it, "that they may be punished by having the truth presented to them in a form they cannot understand." Now this goes upon the assumption, which undoubtedly the Evangelists make, that a parable is an allegory, a darkening of knowledge and not an enlightenment. But Jesus certainly did not mean that the most important part of his teaching should hide the truth rather than reveal it, and there is every reason to suppose that the parable was his ordinary way of teaching in the case of his disciples as well as of the people. The whole passage to which this incident belongs seems to have been due to Mark. In the source there apparently was a group of parables here, and the last one of them, the parable of the scribe instructed into the kingdom, shows that at least they were meant for the disciples as much as for the people. Mark has broken into this series so that he may give an allegorical explanation of one of them : but that it is an interruption there are several things which go to show. He has to shift the scene in an unnatural way ; he is obliged to make up a part of his discourse from sayings which belong elsewhere ; the rest of it differs decidedly in style from the parables themselves, and in the use of such a phrase as the *mystery* of the kingdom, and in the absolute way in which "the word" is used, shows a later theological stand-point ; and finally there is the mistaken idea as to what a parable is. In many cases no doubt it is not hard to give the parable an



allegorical turn, but this is always arbitrary, and it always runs the risk by its attention to details of losing the real point of the parable itself. Even in the parable of the sower, where it is easiest of all, Mark has to interpret the seed, sometimes as the word of preaching, and sometimes as the hearer; and when we come to apply it to the parable of the unjust steward, or of the unjust judge, or of the discontented laborers, the difficulties are endless. When we find therefore that we are getting into allegory, it will make us suspect that we have to do, not with Jesus' own words, but with the words of the Evangelist instead. When this is something which is added to a parable of Jesus' own it usually is not difficult to detect. There is for example the allegory of the wedding-garment which is attached to the parable of the marriage feast; not only does this add an incongruous idea to a parable which is already complete, and which has a perfectly plain and simple meaning, but Luke knows nothing about it. And in the same parable the "certain man" of Luke has been changed into a king, who makes a marriage feast for his son, the Messiah, whose servants, the prophets, are killed and beaten, and who sends out his armies to "destroy those murderers and burn up their city," an obvious reference to the Jews and to Jerusalem. In the parable of the talents, on the other hand, Luke has been the offender, and has brought in a motiveless allusion to Archelaus. When it is the whole parable that is at fault we perhaps cannot speak so confidently, and yet here again we usually do not have to hesitate very long. The best example of this is the parable of the wicked husbandmen, which from beginning to end is nothing but an allegory. But even apart from the fact that it is an allegory there are many

grounds for suspecting it. Surely a parable which assumes that Jesus had been slain, just as the prophets had been slain, is more natural in the mouth of a disciple after Jesus' death than it is in the mouth of Jesus himself, while he was still alive. Jesus is spoken of, too, in an unusual way as the Son of God, and we seem even to get an echo of the fact that he was put to death without the city, when it is said that the husbandmen "cast him out of the vineyard and slew him." And the parable violates another canon besides : it is forced and unnatural, while Jesus' parables are always true to life. An allegory has indeed to be unnatural, for the details do not of their own accord fall into place, and it is necessary to force them in ; and so here we find the husbandmen pursuing a design which is quite absurd, and we find the owner of the vineyard acting in a way in which no one ever would have acted, only that the allegory may be kept up. 'This is not at all Jesus' method ; Jesus does not manufacture his parables, they are revealed to him. And wherever we meet with a made-up story, the likelihood is that it must be rejected.

And before we leave the matter of the parables, a word ought to be said about the three long parables which are peculiar to Luke, the parables of the prodigal son, the good Samaritan, and the rich man and Lazarus. Parables we call them, but strictly they are not parables after all ; they differ essentially from the most of Jesus' parables. Instead of expressing a spiritual truth in a natural analogy, they are simply illustrations of a truth by a fictitious example. Cases of something of the same sort are to be found in the better attested discourses, and the story of the unforgiving debtor, for example, does not differ materially from the story of the prodigal son ; but such instances are rare,

and nothing indeed is quite parallel to the stories of the good Samaritan and of Lazarus. Moreover, all the three narratives have certain peculiarities about them, in the manner of narration, which serve to set them off by themselves apart from the other discourses of Jesus. A suspicion about them, therefore, inevitably arises, not simply because they stand in a measure by themselves, but because this difference from Jesus' ordinary manner only appears in the late and untrustworthy tradition which is represented by Luke. And against each of these three stories there are special grounds of objection. The introduction to the story of the Samaritan is constructed out of an incident which in its original form had an entirely different turn ;<sup>1</sup> the story of the prodigal son appears to be based upon a much simpler parable in Matthew, the parable of the two sons ; and the story of Lazarus, besides being introduced by sayings which did not at first belong to it, is very obscure, and just what it teaches is a puzzle. From the final sentence we should think that it was meant to show the validity of the Law of Moses ; and yet this sentence only is tacked on to the end of the story, without receiving any proof or illustration from it, and might quite as well have stood alone. The whole thing cannot readily be made to teach anything except the virtue of poverty and the damnableness of wealth. The beauty of the first two stories is undeniable, but their beauty is not lessened if they come from some one else than Jesus ; and of course it would be very easy for anything of the kind to get attributed to Jesus when its real origin was forgotten.

If we turn back now to the point from which we started, the parable of the lost sheep, the comparison

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<sup>1</sup> See Matt. 22 : 34 ff.

will suggest another caution, that the applications of the parables are much more likely to be the work of the Evangelists than of Jesus, and that the Evangelists are by no means certain to be right. When the first Evangelist converts the sign of Jonah into a prediction of the resurrection, we have a striking example of this in a little different field, but less apparent examples are scattered through the Gospels. "Or else," says Jesus in the parable of the warring kings, "while the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth an ambassage and asketh conditions of peace"; and the Evangelist adds, "So, therefore, whosoever he be of you that renounceth not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple,"—here the application seems to be connected with the Evangelist's peculiar views about poverty. In general it seems plain that Jesus left his hearers to make their application for themselves, and when we find the moral given too expressly we must be suspicious of it. And somewhat in line with this there are likely to be a number of cases where, without any external mark of it, the Evangelist has modified what he has before him in a greater or less degree. Such cases cannot be classified, and no absolute demonstration can be given for them; much will have to be left to the feeling of the reader. There is the quotation in the Sermon on the Mount which Jesus makes from the Old Testament, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and"—so Matthew adds—"hate thine enemy." But this of course we shall not find in the Old Testament, and, moreover, the contrast in Jesus' thought is not between hating our enemies and loving them, but between loving our friends and loving our enemies as well, between partial and universal love: may we not venture therefore to throw the last clause out of Jesus' words? Sometimes

the insertion has been a more important one than this. In the discourse about John, for instance, there is a sentence in which Jesus speaks of John as fulfilling a prophecy in Isaiah. But if we drop this out and notice how closely the parts on either side of it fit together—"yea, I say unto you, and more than a prophet. Among those born of women there hath not arisen a greater,"—it will seem most likely that some Evangelist on his own notion has thrust in this prophecy which the Church had found for John. For it is to take all the meaning out of Jesus' words to make him put John's greatness simply in the fact that he had announced the immediate coming of the Messiah. And still another instance is that most violent of all the words attributed to Jesus, "ye serpents, ye offspring of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of Gehenna!" which in this case betrays itself by its dependence on the words of the Baptist.

It is evident therefore that to determine just what Jesus said is not a work which can be done off-hand ; it requires a continual weighing and sifting. And there is a special danger from the fact that Jesus is so far above his hearers, that just so soon as they leave the task simply of reporting word for word what Jesus said, they are pretty certain to bring their own misconceptions in. We constantly shall find upon the same subject views attributed to Jesus which are mutually inconsistent, a spiritual view, and a materialistic, Jewish view, and we shall have to choose between them. And this furnishes one other rule of interpretation : whenever we find that this is the case, the probabilities in so far lie with the more spiritual view. Jesus we know in many things did rise far above his contemporaries ; it is more likely therefore that his

reporters have brought him down to their own level than that they have been able to rise above him. It is true that we cannot assume this without question in every case ; only the evidence for a belief which puts Jesus below his own general level must needs be stronger than that which would satisfy us in the case of a belief which harmonizes with Jesus' other teachings. And upon this principle of course we must always go, that what is uncertain must be judged by what is sure. There are some things in Jesus' teaching which we can establish beyond a doubt, and other things must be at least in a measure consistent with these. To establish anything upon a single saying, or even to establish it upon two or three sayings, will be hazardous, unless the genuineness of these sayings is pretty certain. With these things in mind therefore we shall try to bring into order the somewhat chaotic condition of the Gospels, and to determine in their main outlines what the essential points in Jesus' doctrine were.







## CHAPTER II.

### THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN.

WHAT then was the sum of Jesus' teaching? What lay at the centre of the announcement which he had to make to his nation? Mark, as it seems, was the first to give a literary form to this: Jesus, he says, came into Galilee preaching the Gospel of God and saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent ye, and believe in the Gospel. Now certainly Jesus did not use these very words, and the passage only pretends to be a summary of his message; but to this extent undoubtedly Mark is right, that it is the kingdom of heaven which Jesus came to proclaim. But Mark also gives us the impression which, knowing nothing to the contrary, would be the natural view to hold, that Jesus' attitude towards the kingdom was essentially the attitude of his nation, an attitude to which the national, the political features were by no means unimportant, even if they did not occupy the foremost place. Certainly if Jesus had made his announcement in this bald way the people could have got no other notion from it, and if he had announced it as something which was at hand, as something coming in the future, the inference would be the same. But Mark's statement in

itself has no value, for it is dependent on the words of John the Baptist; and if we look at the actual sayings of Jesus we shall see at once that, whatever his idea of the kingdom may have been, it differed greatly from the idea which his countrymen had of it.

By far the most complete statement which Jesus makes of his position is to be found in the Sermon on the Mount, and indeed it would seem that Jesus here intended to give in a brief form the substance of his teaching about the kingdom. The discourse was spoken to the disciples, as all the internal evidence goes to show, and it probably belongs to the latter part of Jesus' ministry; for so long a sermon could not easily have been remembered when the disciples were new to Jesus' teaching. Unfortunately, we do not now have this discourse in its original form, as a comparison of Matthew and of Luke will soon convince one. Luke has abbreviated constantly by leaving out those sayings which have reference to Jewish customs and beliefs, and what he has retained he often has paraphrased very freely; while Matthew in his usual fashion has interwoven with it sayings which at first were quite distinct. But many of these sayings are still to be found in Luke in a far better connection, and by a careful comparison it is possible to restore within reasonable limits the discourse as it stood originally. It appears to start with that Luke, apart from the Woes, which he certainly adds on his own account, has the Beatitudes in a more original form. Luke's version of them is so consistent that it is hard to think he got it by mutilating the longer form in Matthew, while Matthew on the other hand is not quite congruous throughout, he borrows liberally from the Old Testament, and his changes are easily to be explained

on the basis of a simpler account. The first Beatitude in particular, despite the efforts to find a profound meaning in it, is not a natural expression, as the very necessity for these efforts shows, and it is easily accounted for as a somewhat mechanical addition to the "poor" of Luke. Then, too, the second Beatitude Matthew has been forced to leave without spiritualizing it. Besides, the direct address, "Blessed are ye," is proven at any rate for the last Beatitude, so that the tenth verse in Matthew is a repetition which is due to him; and the way in which the Sermon goes on in Matthew shows that Jesus is speaking to his disciples directly. From this point, however, there is little to do except to throw out those sayings which have a better connection in Luke. These are the sayings about salt, where the warning is not called for by the context, about the adversary and about divorce, the Lord's prayer, the discourse about laying up treasure, and all that follows it through the warnings against anxiety. Then the saying about pearls before swine, while it is not found in Luke, hardly belongs here, for it breaks into the connection; and the two discourses about seeking and finding, and about the narrow way, also find their place in Luke. Again in Luke the last part of the Sermon—Luke 6 : 43-45—seems to follow the original more closely than Matthew does, for Matthew makes these words refer to false prophets, which is contrary to the whole meaning of the discourse. Jesus has been referring throughout to personal conduct, he ends with a reference to personal conduct, and it must be of the same thing that he is speaking here. And this is shown also by the literary structure of Matthew. Luke reads: "A good tree bringeth not forth corrupt fruit, neither doth a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.

For every tree is known by its own fruit. For of thorns men do not gather figs, nor of a bramble bush gather they grapes." Matthew, on account of his reference to false prophets, starts with "Ye shall know them by their fruits." Then he goes back to the verse he has omitted, but after it he again repeats, "By their fruits ye shall know them," just as it is found in Luke ; so that this seems to be the right place for the saying.

Now if we examine carefully the discourse which we have left after this critical process, it will be found that there is one very definite conception which dominates the whole of it, which Jesus insists upon, and which he says expressly is the crucial point in the relation of the citizen to the new kingdom. The kingdom implies of course the rule of God, but it is a government which has absolutely nothing external about it, which is directed towards the heart and conscience of the individual citizen, which aims, not to bring about outward conformity simply, but conformity which is due to character, and which in every detail rests squarely upon the great, and to Jesus the self-evident principles of righteousness. Do not be angry, be forgiving, avoid lustful thoughts, be scrupulously truthful, return good for evil, love your enemies, avoid pride and ostentation, be merciful and charitable in judgment ; it is by your fruits that you will be judged, he who follows these commandments of mine is the wise man, he who neglects them the fool,—from beginning to end a single note runs through the whole, it is in this the kingdom consists, and there is no hint that it consists in anything else. If one were to put it in a single sentence it would be something like this—the kingdom of heaven is the rule of righteousness in human life, when righteousness is not looked at as

something external, but as the natural fruits of a heart that is governed by love to God and love to men.

If this really is the heart of Jesus' idea of the kingdom, when we take into account all that it implies it is far and away the greatest achievement in religious thought which the world has witnessed. That Jesus should have held so tenaciously to the elements of real and permanent religious value for which the human heart can never cease to crave, and that he yet should have been able to free these so effectually from the extra-beliefs, the transient forms by which men's fancies have tried to picture to themselves the eternal verities of which dimly and partially they had caught a glimpse, and should have brought out into a clear light their intimate and absolutely essential relationship to conduct, would be a marvel in any case, and it is the more marvellous when we consider how absolutely foreign it all was to the Judaism of the times. Indeed, even to the present day the Church has not been able to convince itself that religion, if it is to be secure, does not need the extra support of all these appeals to the imagination and the material sense. Most of all, men constantly are clamoring for something in religion which shall serve to guarantee for them their own happiness and safety, and the closer they can cling to the solid foundation of a sensible earth, the better they are pleased. Accordingly, in Jesus' day, the great mass of the people were for having an earthly kingdom, with plenty to eat and drink, a king with supernatural powers enough to insure their getting the better of their enemies, and a certain amount of worship and morality, no doubt, somewhere in the background. From this it is a long ways, certainly, to the ordinary conception of Christianity, and yet something of the



same mistake there is in both : both, that is, put religion too much in the idea of the reward attached to it from the outside. In Christianity this appears in the altogether disproportionate place which is given to the doctrine of heaven. This is what the kingdom of heaven early came to stand for : it was taken to mean a future kingdom into which death alone can bring us, heaven, shut off by the sharpest boundaries from the things of earth. Now, without doubt, there is much in this conception which answers to a real religious need, and which we could ill afford to do without. We need the comfort of looking to the future, when the conditions which hem us in and thwart us, and so often render wickedness triumphant and goodness impotent, shall be done away, when joy shall take the place of sadness, and that harmony which we crave in vain in our present life shall be a thing accomplished. But then, this is not the whole of religion, and it is not the core of it, and by putting the first emphasis upon it, it may lead to a religion which is very faulty and perverted. And this always has been the tendency in human thought. Religion has been made to gather about the soul's salvation, salvation, that is, in this narrow sense, of escape from punishment and the getting of a heavenly reward. Duty, conduct, character, have been hardly more than a road to heaven and eternal happiness. But it is clear that this hope, just of getting into heaven, unless it is bound up very closely indeed with the thought of the sort of character which heaven implies, is only a selfish hope, none the less selfish, only a bit more etherialized, because the objects of its desire are after death rather than before it. And selfishness is not religion. God is not God, truth is not truth, goodness is not goodness, simply



that you and I may be forever happy. It may be that God would not be God if there were not true and lasting joy within the reach of men, but at least the emphasis must not be put upon the wrong side. Now, this is what, in the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus appears to recognize and teach : God, righteousness,—these are first and foremost. Blessedness they do indeed bring with them, but it is not the blessedness which gives to them their worth, and it is only by striving after them for their own sakes that the blessedness will come. Jesus' kingdom is a kingdom which rests upon character. It is the bringing into the individual and into the universal life the eternal principles of righteousness. It is the joyful recognition of these, not simply as leading to my happiness, but as in themselves eternally worthy and binding. It is the swallowing up of the selfish will in the will of God, and the recognition that God's will is not something vague and belonging to another world than this, but that it unfolds itself in the ordinary human relations and duties. It is human society become divine by having all the selfishness in it rooted out, and God's will recognized freely by each individual.

But it may be said that the Sermon on the Mount does not necessarily imply all this, or at least that it does not imply this conception so exclusively. For one may still insist with all strenuousness upon the need of character, and yet make the kingdom itself to consist in some more outward and sensible relationship between God and men. This was true of John, for example. No man yielded to John in the assertion of the supremacy of righteousness, and yet to him the kingdom was not come till the sinners were weeded out of the nation and the Messiah had appeared, a

visible representative of God's sway. So in Jesus' case it may have been that, while he set up conduct as an absolute necessity for the citizen, he nevertheless by the kingdom itself meant not this only, but a special and supernatural relationship into which God was to enter with men, either a supra-mundane, heavenly consummation, when the principles which he had laid down were to be completely victorious, or it may be even an earthly realization of a completely righteous nation, perhaps established by a special display of God's power. Both of these suppositions, in so far as they involve a supernatural intervention, we shall have to consider more at length in another chapter, when we come to ask what Jesus expected of the future of his kingdom. For the present, just a word may be sufficient. It is often said that the two conceptions, the thought of the kingdom as the natural growth of men in their individual lives and their social relations into the divine character, and as the consummation of all things in a society under supernatural conditions, are not mutually inconsistent, but are only the two parts of one conception. This claim, however, is only partially true. No doubt it is a fact that Jesus believed in what we may call by the name of Heaven. Nevertheless, heaven stands first of all for the idea of happiness, of rest and peace after the conflict of life, of the satisfaction of human cravings, and as such it is entirely distinct from the idea of righteousness and its authoritative claims, which, from the nature of the case, we can represent only under the form of the human relationships and duties which we are familiar with. Accordingly, while one may hold the two ideas together and find in one the supplement of the other, yet they are two ideas after all, and it is not easy to

combine them into one definite conception without slighting the one or the other. And it makes all the difference in the world whether religion is made to centre first of all about the future, or about the everyday duties of the present. And all that we are trying to maintain is that, while Jesus recognized hope for the future as a legitimate incentive and consolation, he did not lay the stress of his teaching upon this, but made it to centre about conduct and character for this present world; and this is what we think the Sermon on the Mount tends to show. This, however, we shall return to later. But apart from all question of the supernatural, it will be necessary to take a somewhat more extended survey of Jesus' teaching about the kingdom with reference to the charge which often has been brought against him, and which has, perhaps, not been sufficiently replied to as yet, that, after all, though doubtless with the best and most patriotic of intentions, political motives did have some weight with him, and that his hope for a righteous nation was somehow or other connected with the deliverance of Israel from the adverse external conditions with which it was struggling.

As against any such political aim on Jesus' part, the very name which he chooses is significant. According to Mark and Luke it is the kingdom of God, but Matthew has it, the kingdom of heaven. It is not probable that both names were used as the ordinary designation, and from critical reasons, as well as from historical, Matthew is probably to be preferred. In one verse at least—Matt. 7 : 21—"heaven" seems to be required by the parallelism of the sentence; and in another case—21 : 43—Matthew himself has "kingdom of God," and he has it in a verse which seems to be due to himself. So that it is not probable that he would have changed

“God” to “heaven” wherever he found it in his source, and then have used “God” himself where no change would have been necessary. But “the kingdom of heaven” is just such a title as we might have expected one to use who wished to dissociate his kingdom as much as possible from all earthly empire, and point to it simply as a divine ideal to be realized among men. And then the kingdom—so Jesus implies at the beginning of the Sermon on the Mount—was something which was intended to bring joy, blessedness, and to bring it into the lives of those who stood most in need of it, of the poor, the wretched, whom religion, as well as philosophy and culture, had hitherto been very apt to neglect. One who had come to announce the restoration of the national greatness, the approach of a time when the religion of their ancestors might be enjoyed free of disturbance, never would have spoken first of all in this way. This tenderness towards the weak ones of mankind, and the confidence that he has that which will fill the void in their lives, is one of the striking things in Jesus’ teaching: but he always represents this ministry as a moral one; he has come to heal the sick who need a physician; and he never regards this as a means, as a reform of the nation which will allow the political ideal to be realized, but as the end in itself. He that is but little in the kingdom of heaven, he says, is greater than John, and this has no meaning unless the greatness of the kingdom is solely a spiritual greatness, an eminence in spiritual knowledge and achievement. And indeed in so many words Jesus puts the kingdom and righteousness together, as if they were one and the same thing, and sharply distinguishes them from other, from material things.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Matt. 6 : 33.

And once again, in the prayer which he makes, the kingdom is to come when God's will is done on earth. It is the innocence and the humility of the child which is the necessary condition of entrance. The harvest is to be reaped, not by the expulsion of the Romans and the setting up of a kingdom of the saints, but by the work of the laborers who are to be sent forth into the harvest, among the people. The Pharisees, Jesus complains, have shut up the kingdom of heaven against men, and not content with refusing to enter in themselves, they have kept out those who were on the point of entering. If already they have done this, the kingdom already is established, and their fault is that they have refused to see it in the righteousness which Jesus preached. And indeed Jesus tells them on another occasion that while they are looking for some outward demonstration to which they can point and say, Lo here, or Lo there, the kingdom already has sprung up silently in their midst.

An ideal such as this certainly has very little in common with political aims of any sort, indeed it seems entirely to exclude them ; and there are other sayings of Jesus which establish this still more securely. The recognition of the kingdom and its Messiah, so Jesus tells Peter, does not belong to flesh and blood, and, therefore, it must be something which is purely spiritual, and has nothing to do with earthly things. If Luke is to be trusted, we find Jesus expressly rejecting the function which would have been proper to him as the Messiah of the popular kingdom, the function of judge and divider, and he certainly declines to have anything to do with the question which, if in any sense his aim had been political, he must have attached some importance to, the relation in which the country



stood to Cæsar and the Roman government. Still, one has to recognize two or three elements in the Gospels which seem to go against this view, and to show that Jesus after all was not wholly untouched by the popular ideals. One thing indeed which might be used to show this, does really, we think, point the other way, the promise which Jesus makes to his disciples, seemingly a political promise, that they shall sit on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel. If this really was spoken by Jesus, and was meant to be understood literally, then Jesus must have thought of a political emancipation, however this emancipation was to be brought about. But if this imagery is to be taken literally, it stands very nearly alone among Jesus' sayings, and that fact by itself would almost be enough to show the saying was not genuine; and so soon as we get it in its right connection we shall see that there is no need of its being taken literally at all. The connection which Matthew gives to it is hardly possible, for it seems clearly to be thrust in between Peter's question and the real answer which was given to that question.<sup>1</sup> But Luke places it at the end of a discourse, the discourse on ambition, which, as the other Evangelists show, was called forth by a request which James and John had made; and here it fits in admirably. James and John had come to Jesus asking for the chief places in the kingdom of heaven, a kingdom which they still looked upon as something material; and Jesus' words on the occasion are significant. He does not say that hereafter the chief place shall be given to him who deserves it best by his service, that humility and self-sacrifice now shall be exchanged for honor and position when the kingdom is established: he says that

<sup>1</sup> Matt. 19 : 28.



humility *is* greatness, that the chief place consists in being the servant of all. And then, when immediately he promises to the Twelve the greatness which James and John had just been seeking, we only can interpret this by what Jesus himself has said. The greatness which he promises to them is the greatness of service ; it is the superiority which comes from doing and from suffering the most, the superiority which Jesus himself had won ; and the form in which he puts this probably was suggested by the brothers' question. This, we think therefore, shows what we have found was shown by other things, that Jesus' conception of the kingdom was wholly spiritual ; there are two things, however, which cannot easily be explained in this way and which apparently show a very different point of view, and these are the mission of the twelve Apostles, and the entry into Jerusalem.

With regard to the mission of the disciples it is hard to see how, under the circumstances, it could have failed to have a very conspicuous political significance. In the first place the disciples themselves thought of the kingdom much as the people thought of it, and as yet were far from comprehending the real bearing of Jesus' conception. And even if they partly had understood him, the people could not have done so ; to them the disciples' words only could have had one meaning. And then when we ask in what the disciples' message consisted we meet with difficulty. If apart from Jesus' teachings about the kingdom they pointed to Jesus as the Messiah, they simply were sowing the seeds of revolution ; and even if they did not do this expressly, if, as is hardly conceivable, they confined themselves to the bare statement that the kingdom was at hand, the result still would have been very much the same.

For both the kingdom and the Messiahship were to the Jewish mind indissolubly bound up with the thought of political change, and if Jesus' purpose was to rid the ideal of the kingdom of its political features, the worst thing he could do would be to sow broadcast hopes which only would stand in the way of the fulfilment of his designs. Jesus could not well have failed to see this, and if in spite of it the disciples were sent out, the easiest explanation is that, disappointed at his slow progress, he had determined to arouse the popular enthusiasm and to make use of it to promote his aims. But this it is hard to believe, for not only is it utterly opposed to the view of the kingdom which Jesus' own words make it almost certain that he held, but it is opposed to the fact that even after Jesus' appearance at Jerusalem his enemies had no proof that he claimed to be the Messiah. The whole incident therefore, we should doubt, even if we had no other reasons to appeal to ; but other reasons are by no means lacking.

If we examine the speech which is attributed to Jesus on this occasion, there is a curious thing that will be noticed about it. Of all the sayings of which the speech is made up, there is not a single one against which plausible objections cannot be brought. We do not mean to say that all of these objections are equally strong, or that by themselves the sayings might not possibly be vindicated for Jesus ; only when we find that all of them may be objected to, the defence that can be made for each one of them loses something of its force. If we take the speech in order, first there comes the injunction not to preach to Gentiles or Samaritans. It is not necessary to ask here whether this is consistent with Jesus' own views ; we only will suggest that the injunction is not likely because it is

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useless. The disciples never would have thought of doing what Jesus commands them not to do ; that they were to go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel would have been the only thing that would have entered their minds. On the contrary, the words seem to imply a time when missions to the Gentiles and to the Samaritans were not unheard of, or else the prohibition of them seems unintelligible, not the time of Jesus therefore, but later times after the Church had been established. The difficulty of the announcement which they were to make already has been touched upon. The difficulty vanishes if we do not try to account for the narrative as a real event, but suppose that, when the labors of the Apostles had become familiar, this activity of theirs was carried back into the times of Jesus, and they were thought of as sent out by Jesus to preach his Messiahship, just as they really did go out in later times. And then an ideal speech that suited the occasion was put in Jesus' mouth, as in the book of Acts speeches are put in the mouths of the Apostles.

The next saying, in the form in which it is given in Matthew, is clearly an impossibility : "Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out demons." But this it is likely is not the original form, and if we drop the two middle clauses we shall probably have the sentence as it stood at first ; for this is all that the other Evangelists know of, the healing of the sick and the casting out of demons. But even in this simple form the saying is doubtful enough, for we have already shown that the other sayings attributed to Jesus in behalf of miracles are to be rejected. And it is very easy to see how a later writer, who believed in the Apostles' miracles, should infer that the power had

been formally bestowed upon them by Jesus,—easier by all means than it is to think of Jesus as really doing this. The next sentence also is better suited to later times than it is to the times of Jesus. Certainly this entire absence of self-support would be more natural for itinerant teachers in communities where already there were Christian families to aid them, than it would be in wholly new fields; and the injunction which comes just after, to seek out a worthy family and there abide, also suggests this, for it only would be with a co-religionist that a stranger could count so securely on a continued welcome. Nor is this anxiety that the disciples should be supported by the community, that they should not even use the money they possessed, quite worthy of Jesus; it would seem to point rather to a time when the support of itinerant preachers had become an ecclesiastical question.

Jesus next goes on to give directions as to the attitude which the disciples are to bear towards their hearers. These directions are somewhat trivial, and are scarcely of the sort which one would suppose the disciples would have needed most; and the whole passage does not impress us as being in the spirit of Jesus. Least of all is it like Jesus to encourage the impatience of his disciples, to tell them to shake off the dust of their feet against those who will not hear them; and the comparison with Sodom shocks us by its quite uncalled-for severity. And indeed this saying is taken from another discourse by Jesus, from the woes against the Galilean cities, and even here it seems to have been added by the Evangelist, to correspond with the saying which goes just before, "It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment than for you."

But in this connection the severity is justified, for Jesus is speaking of the cities to which he had devoted the greater part of his ministry ; in our passage however the words are spoken of cities which only were to receive a flying visit from a disciple, and which, if they rejected his message, did not by any means reject the truth which Chorazin and Capernaum had rejected. But this is easy to understand from a disciple who had in his thoughts a rejection of the Gospel which had followed years of teaching by the Apostles. And pointing to the same thing is the impression which one gets from our passage of a more extended ministry than would have been possible in Jesus' lifetime. The disciples are to go from city to city, they are to stay in each till their message has been accepted or until it has been rejected. But this could not happen all at once, and our passage implies as much when it assumes that the disciples will be tempted to move about from house to house. Such a prolonged ministry in Jesus' lifetime is unlikely ; what the disciples needed was not practice in preaching but the companionship of Jesus, and an opportunity themselves to learn, and Jesus hardly would have ventured to assign them such an errand until they were better prepared for it. In the same direction, too, points the fact that they are warned against dangers, they are sent out as sheep into the midst of wolves. But dangers only came at a later time, and Jesus could not have anticipated danger in such a mission as this. And then the speech closes with a threat—Luke probably has retained this more correctly—"Whoso receiveth you receiveth me, and whoso rejecteth you, rejecteth me, and whoso rejecteth me rejecteth him that sent me." Matthew has added a saying peculiar



to himself, and he has made the whole into a promise to those who should receive the disciples; but the objection to this is that the promises are made to persons who are absent, and have no relation to the disciples, to whom the words are immediately addressed. And this last sentence also calls up objections; to say nothing of the fact that it implies Jesus' relationship to God in a way in which Jesus very seldom speaks of it, it is not even just, for it is not true that a rejection of the disciples under these circumstances would in any sense have been a rejection of the truth for which Jesus stood.

For all these reasons we do not hesitate to reject the whole account, and still less do we hesitate to reject the account of the entry into Jerusalem. This too is unintelligible apart from some political aim. What possible pleasure could Jesus take in the shouts of a fanatical rabble, if the dignity which they claimed for him was something utterly opposed to what he was seeking to obtain? Could he really not forego the gratification of this bit of triumph under false pretences before his final failure? But to this narrative the same objections apply which applied to the other: it is not like Jesus, and it would have put an end to any uncertainty which the Pharisees felt about his claims to the Messiahship. And in itself the narrative has very little in its favor: the miracle with which it opens, its evident and minute dependence upon the Old Testament, the manifest motive there was for it in the glorification of Jesus, all tell against it. And probably the immediate occasion for it we have in the words with which Jesus is welcomed by the multitude. Already in a saying which had been attributed to Jesus he had said, "Ye shall not see me until ye say,



Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord '' ; and now that he actually was to enter the city, must not the people have met him with these words ? We find therefore no reason to alter the opinion which we reached before, or to think that Jesus' conception of the kingdom had in it the smallest political element.





## CHAPTER III.

### THE MESSIAHSHIP OF JESUS.

IN the conclusion which has been reached about the form which the conception of the kingdom took in Jesus' mind, a good deal is already implied with regard to the idea which he had of the Messiah of that kingdom. If the kingdom is a purely spiritual one, a kingdom of righteousness, then at one blow all the adventitious dignity of the popular Messiah, the earthly glory, the seat on the throne of David, become a matter of perfect indifference. When this is granted, however, there still is a considerable amount of perplexity attaching to the subject, and the difficulty may be summed up with sufficient accuracy in the two questions, What part did Jesus' Messiahship play in his dealings with the people? and, Just how did it present itself to his own consciousness, and how did he speak of it in his communications with his chosen disciples? These two questions play into each other more or less, and the answer to one of them suggests the answer to the other, but nevertheless, they are distinct enough to make it convenient to consider them apart.

It ordinarily is assumed that the fact of Jesus' Messiahship had a prominent place, if not the most prominent, in his own consciousness, and that the

recognition of this Messiahship was the objective point towards which all his efforts were directed. And undoubtedly this is the idea which is present in our sources. It is easy to see how such a belief got to prevail: the idea of Jesus as the Messiah was the central thing in the preaching of the Apostles, among whom Jesus' conception of righteousness, while it influenced their lives and their incidental teachings profoundly, never was able to assume the central place in their theories of religion, and compete in the line of doctrine and theology with their earlier Jewish conceptions; and accordingly it would seem quite natural that Jesus should work to get this belief fixed in the people's minds, that he should send his disciples out to spread it everywhere and make it familiar, and should encourage it wherever it appeared. Nevertheless, there are serious difficulties in the way of this manner of conceiving Jesus' ministry which have not always been regarded. It is certain that to the minds of the people such an announcement must have conveyed a notion which differed totally from that which Jesus had himself, and which promoted just the error which proved one of the greatest stumbling-blocks in his ministry, and against which he had constantly to be fighting. Moreover, it is idle to suppose that any man could have been the centre of Messianic hopes for so long a time, and still have aroused no sort of opposition from the watchful Roman authorities. The first of these difficulties indeed usually receives a half-way recognition, but the attempt to mend things only makes the matter worse. In order to harmonize all the points of view which make their appearance in the Gospels, Jesus is made to blow hot and cold with the same breath; he lets the belief in his Messiahship spread,

and then tries to work it over into his own conception ; he thinks to avoid the complications which result simply by refusing to meet the advances of those who want to see him accept the popular rôle, while he still insists upon the fact of his Messiahship ; by turns he tries in some striking way to stimulate belief, by feeding men miraculously, by riding in triumph into Jerusalem, and then again, to vary matters, he makes spasmodic and what must necessarily be quite useless, efforts to stem the tide by forbidding the report of something which might seem a bid for popular favor. But such a veering course as this is quite inexplicable. If belief in Jesus as the popular Messiah had been only a stepping-stone, a halting-place on the road to the belief which Jesus himself wished to inspire, then the course would have had its advantages ; but this was not the case, and instead of being a help to him it was a positive hindrance and a detriment. What Jesus had to do then, if we can give him credit for a very moderate share of clear-sightedness, was to avoid arousing hopes which he afterwards would have to be to the pains of extinguishing, and from the start to keep the question of his Messiahship resolutely in the background until men were ready to receive it ; there was no keeping it within bounds, if once it were allowed to get started at all. This then is what, from *a priori* reasoning, we should expect Jesus to do, and that he did do it is shown by the best-attested facts in the Gospels. Of course there are plenty of statements to the contrary, but these must be subjected to a liberal discount by reason of the obvious influences which were at hand to produce them. It would be strange indeed if later times had not imported something of its own faith into Jesus' words and acts. And it is to be no-

ticed that by far the greater number of these cases, where Jesus is saluted as the Messiah, or where he acts in such a way that his Messiahship is implied, occur in the stories of miracles, and so are demonstrated to be of later origin. On the other hand, there is to start with the account of Peter's confession at Cæsarea Philippi, which is of capital importance on the question. Here it is distinctly implied that up to this time the people had not thought of Jesus as the Messiah, but only as some great prophet; and at the close of the account again Jesus strictly forbids that the fact should be made known. To this narrative we shall have occasion to return again. The name which Jesus chooses to designate himself also speaks for the same conclusion. It is still an unsettled question whether there is any evidence that already in Jesus' day the term "Son of man" carried any Messianic significance with it, and in the absence of conclusive proof to the contrary the testimony of the Gospels must be accepted as decisive. This goes strongly against any such notion. In particular, Jesus never could have asked the question of his disciples, "Whom do men say that the Son of man is?" and have followed it by the second question, "Whom do ye say that I am?" if the answer already was contained in the former phrase; and that this is the real form of the question is indicated by Peter's corresponding phrase, "the Son of God," apparently a reference to it. The question is a harder one just what Jesus himself had in mind when he chose the phrase, and it is complicated by the fact that the words occur so often in very doubtful passages. Most of these passages have already received some attention, or else will be treated of before we are finished; without, therefore, going for a second time

into a detailed criticism, it will be enough to say that there are only five places in our opinion where the words can be allowed to be genuine. One of these is the case just mentioned in the account of Peter's confession; then there are the two sayings, "The Son of man hath not where to lay his head," and, "The Son of man came eating and drinking," and perhaps the saying about the unpardonable sin, and the words which Jesus is reported to have spoken at his trial. Reasons will appear in another chapter why we do not think it probable the phrase was taken from the book of Daniel and had an apocalyptic sense attached to it; it will be noticed that the passages we have quoted none of them point to this, not the last one even when the true reading is retained.<sup>1</sup> It is tempting, when one remembers the deep human sympathy of Jesus, and the part which it played in the consciousness of his mission, to think that this must in some way have lain at the bottom of his choice of expression, and two of the passages—the others do not give any clear indication one way or another—are decidedly in favor of this view. Deeply impressed with the sense of his character as the up-lifter of humanity, it would be very natural that he should catch up an expression which seemed to give the essence of his mission so admirably, and which already one of the great prophets had used to designate himself, without of necessity his giving any special thought to what the elder prophet had meant by it. And at any rate Ezekiel is the most obvious source to which to look for the origin of the phrase, for elsewhere it is by no means so prominent as it is in Ezekiel, and nowhere else is it applied, as Jesus applies it, to a definite person. The fact therefore, to repeat, that

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Luke 22 : 69.



Jesus chose such a term, and not one which pointed clearly to a Messianic dignity, shows that he did not wish to insist upon that dignity. Two or three other indications also may be briefly mentioned. Jesus does on one occasion speak to the people directly about the Messiah, but it is to show them how utterly their conception is in the wrong. If Christ is David's son, how then doth David in spirit call him Lord, saying, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool? Could they not see that if the Messiah's dignity was just what David's dignity had been, the leadership of a material kingdom, David and the Messiah were exactly on a level? it was only if the Messianic dignity was something higher than this, something in a different realm, that David could call him Lord. But here, unless the impression which the narrative makes upon us is totally out of the way, there appears no consciousness that the people were likely to apply this to himself; he speaks of the Messiah and of theories about the Messiah in a much more impersonal way than he could have done if he himself had been a prominent candidate before the people. Then again in another passage Jesus' opponents ask him what authority he has for certain acts of his. The very question shows that Jesus had not appeared in the character of Messiah, for in that case the authority which he claimed would have been evident. And in his answer too he does not make this claim; he declares that his authority rests upon the plane on which John's rested, the authority of truth everywhere against error and falsehood, and that, if they will not recognize such authority, he has none of the palpable evidence which they demand. And of some weight too is the fact that

when Jesus' enemies finally set about his destruction and tried to involve him in political complications, they found it impossible to get hold of any proof against him.

According to the Gospels, just before Jesus was put to death, when he was undergoing his trial, he did declare openly to his judges the truth of what they were trying to establish against him. It is not clear how much authority can be given to this statement, but there is nothing very improbable about it. Jesus saw that his death was determined on, and his words no longer could arouse false expectations ; to refuse now to speak might seem to him cowardice rather than prudence. But this implies that in a real sense Jesus did look upon himself as the Messiah, and we may now turn to the more important question as to just what emphasis he put upon the fact in his own mind. For the most part the belief prevails that he brought it very emphatically to the foreground, that he made altogether startling claims for himself and placed his own person at the centre of his doctrine. We have already indicated our belief that this is overdrawn, that Jesus' idea of himself as the Messiah was thoroughly tributary to his conception of the kingdom, and that it only was the perception of the people's need, and of his own ability to satisfy this need, which clothed itself in the garb which it naturally would take on in a Jewish mind, the belief that he was the bringer of the only true salvation to his people, and therefore the Messiah. Now the very fact that the kingdom of heaven had such a supreme value in Jesus' mind, and the way in which it is the kingdom and the kingdom alone which is insisted on in the greater number of his sayings, makes it unlikely that he di-

vided his allegiance between two not very closely connected doctrines. And again the narrative of the day at Cæsarea Philippi bears this out. Doubts have been raised as to the genuineness of this account, but they do not seem to us to be well founded. It seems certainly to have been present in the earliest source. Mark, it is true, and following him Luke, omit Jesus' words, but the narrative which they do have has all the marks of an abridgment. Apart from Jesus' words Peter's statement ceases in large measure to be intelligible, and in its brevity and terseness gives no hint that the event was one of capital importance in Jesus' life. Since therefore Mark makes of it the crisis in the development of his plot, and since Mark, even when he is the freest, seldom is without some basis in his source for his more important conceptions, it is probable that he had the longer and more intelligible form before him. And in this way it is easily explained how, with no sound tradition to back him, he comes so near to being right in his general conception of Jesus' Messianic relations with the people. Moreover, he uses the opening sentences of the narrative in another story of his own,<sup>1</sup> and when he does this it usually is with material which he gets out of his source. But this would make the origin of the passage much too early to let it be explained as due to Roman influence, and this is the only natural explanation of it if it is not genuine. But there really is no need to suspect the story, for it fits in unobtrusively with what we have shown was the general position which Jesus took. Looked at as in fact the words of Jesus, the passage makes it plain that not even to the disciples had Jesus spoken of himself as

<sup>1</sup> Mk. 6: 14-16.

the Messiah, but that he had been waiting till it should be no external information to them, but they should be ready to see it with their own eyes, and to understand it something as he did himself. It is only as a first confession that the solemn joy of Jesus can be understood. No flesh and blood could reveal it to them, but only the Father in heaven. Up to this time therefore Jesus had been to them only the Son of man ; he had not been willing to force by any artificial process a higher faith in him, although he had been working and hoping that this might come about. And now in fear and trembling he puts the question which shall show whether or no he has succeeded, and he finds that Peter at least has learned the lesson. But with all this it is the kingdom, and not his own position which is the great thing to him. The joy that Jesus showed at Peter's confession was due, not to the recognition of his own dignity, but to the fact that this recognition revealed a dawning sense of what the kingdom really was. Peter had been able to see the head of that kingdom, not in a prince of the house of David, but in a simple teacher of righteousness. And the way in which Jesus goes on to speak is the proof of this. For the reason that he gives for the joy he has just expressed is that now at last the success of the kingdom is assured. Jesus already saw that to him the full assurance of victory was not to be given, he was to set in motion the conflict, and that was all ; and if he were to die with his message still not understood, everything would have been thrown away. But now that Peter once had taken the decisive step and had gotten a glimpse, though ever so slight a one, of Jesus' meaning, the truth would care for its own, and the kingdom must conquer in the end, though the

very gates of Hades should oppose it. Peter was the first, but he was the promise of all the great assembly of the future. Just what form the new movement was to take, what its outward organization was to be, or whether it was to be organized at all, Jesus could leave for the disciples themselves to work out as their own needs and circumstances should prompt them; he was satisfied if he could get firmly settled in them the living principle of truth.

The conception of Jesus' Messiahship was therefore in his own mind distinctly subordinate to the conception of the kingdom of heaven. Nevertheless it would be a mistake to minimize this element of his doctrine, and there seems to be evidence to show that Jesus really did claim for himself a position which at the least was unique. A distinction must be made however between the claims which Jesus makes to the people and those which he makes to the inner and more intimate circle of his disciples. It does not appear that in speaking to the people Jesus assumed a much greater authority than any bold and earnest prophet might have done, and the passages which seems to go against this will not stand a critical scrutiny. The claim to forgive sins already drops away with the miracle to which it is attached. The similar claim to be Lord of the Sabbath is less suspicious, and might without very great difficulty be made out to be in harmony with Jesus' attitude; but the ease with which an Evangelist in telling of the incident might draw the conclusion "The Son of man is Lord even of the Sabbath," and the unlikelihood that Jesus, in arguing with enemies, should have irritated them by a useless and quite anomalous appeal to his own personal authority, which was precisely what they did not



recognize, debars us from allowing any value to the saying. Connected with this there is the somewhat similar saying found only in Matthew, in which Jesus speaks of himself as greater than the Temple, and which probably is one of Matthew's own additions. This has the same objection to it as the last, and both moreover are precluded by the fact that they bring confusion into Jesus' argument. Jesus wishes to show that the accusation which the Pharisees bring against his disciples is based upon no essential principle of right and wrong, and he does this, as his custom is, by appealing to the Law which they all recognize. He only weakens and obscures this if he goes on to say, At any rate I claim the authority to make what rules I please about the Sabbath, or, Since the priests have the right to perform their sacred duties in the Temple on the Sabbath, and I am greater than the Temple, those who are connected with my person have also special privileges. Neither of these are arguments, for they go on premises which are not admitted ; and in the last one there is really no analogy between satisfying one's own needs and carrying on the ritual of worship. The most striking saying which we have left is that in which Jesus compares himself to Solomon and Jonah, and asserts his superiority to both. But while he always speaks with authority it is seldom that he puts his authority forward so prominently as he does here. When he is talking with his disciples, however, the case is somewhat different, and there can be little doubt that he speaks with a self-confidence which at times is almost startling ; though of course not all that is attributed to him can be relied on. The baptismal formula which is put in his mouth would have to be rejected even if it were not represented as being spoken



after his resurrection, for it clearly shows the influence of dogma ; and the promise to be continually in the midst of his disciples to answer prayer is an amplification of a saying which we still have nearer in its original form in Mark.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, the saying which Matthew records, " He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me," probably must give place to the form as it appears in Luke, " If any man cometh to me, and hateth not his father and mother, he cannot be my disciple " ; for the saying stands at the head of a discourse, where the latter form is less abrupt. And between the phrases " for my sake " and " for the kingdom of heaven's sake," both of which are found, the choice is doubtful, with perhaps an advantage in favor of the latter. Nevertheless with no uncertain voice Jesus proclaims himself their Lord and Master, above whom the disciple cannot rise, he commands with all the authority of an " I say unto you," prophets and kings have looked forward to his day, to confess him is to be confessed before the Father. Doubtless this was due in part to a perception of how vast an incentive personal love and devotion must prove in the disciples' lives, but it was also more than this. The very fact that with such confidence Jesus could have felt himself the Messiah of an ideal so lofty and deep-reaching as his own, which made the little ones of the new kingdom greater than the greatest who had gone before, is proof positive of a conviction that his was a relationship to God and men above that which other men had found it possible to attain. But this greatness is no external one, it is a greatness which belongs to service, and which gives him no privileges above his fellows ; in particular it is

<sup>1</sup> Matt. 18 : 19-20 ; cf. Mk. 11 : 24.

a greatness which rests upon the greatness of the truth which has been revealed to him. It is to this that Jesus points in the passage which marks his Messianic consciousness at its highest. "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou didst hide these things from the wise and understanding, and didst reveal them unto babes : yea, Father ; for so it was well pleasing in thy sight. All things have been delivered unto me of my Father : and no one knoweth the Son save the Father ; neither doth any know the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal him. Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me ; for I am meek and lowly in heart : and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." The passage is unique among Jesus' sayings, and yet we do not think that there is any sufficient reasons to doubt that Jesus really spoke it. The knowledge that in the midst of loneliness and misunderstanding and the heartsickness of failure, God knew the truth of him and had marked him for his own, the consciousness that he was permitted to stand in a special relation to the Father, and that to him God had been revealed as he had not revealed himself to any other man, that this revelation was a message of infinite love and compassion to weary and burdened men, which he alone was able to make real to them, this is what gave Jesus his divine confidence. From another man words like these would sound strange and boastful ; from the lips of Jesus they come to us naturally, because of Jesus they are true.



## CHAPTER IV.

### JESUS' ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE LAW.

OF the general attitude which Jesus held towards the Mosaic law and the religion of the Old Testament there can be no reasonable doubt. Jesus certainly believed that the Old Testament furnished a revelation of God's will, and upon it his own spiritual life had been nourished. There is no evidence that upon critical questions which concern the Old Testament he held views which differed from those views which his contemporaries held ; critical questions one might say indeed would have had very little attraction to him. He reveres the Temple with all its associations ; he recognizes sacrifice as one way of paying worship to God ; he does not blame the Pharisees because of the attention which they paid to the lesser matters of the Law, but because they neglected what was weightier ; there is one who is good, he says, and therefore, in having his law the way to eternal life is already given : so much we may agree to without hesitation.

But this, after all has been said, really tells very little indeed, for whatever at bottom Jesus' attitude had been, this in any case would have been true. If Jesus had possessed the reforming spirit, if he had

been fond of attacking errors and correcting misapprehensions, the case would have been different ; but the spirit of iconoclasm was least of all congenial to Jesus, who cared most to insist upon positive truth. Instead of overthrowing old institutions, and thus running the risk that men would lose the elements of truth which these institutions contained, he set himself to introduce, wherever he was able, a higher view, which, as soon as it was mastered, should leave the old one to fall away of itself. If, therefore, Jesus had looked upon the Mosaic law as something temporary and unessential, we should not have expected him to state this plainly ; the age was not ready for such a statement, and his disciples were not ready for it, and he only could give to them principles which afterwards they might carry out for themselves. Nor is it quite right to speak of this as an accommodation to the disciples' views. Jesus' reverence for the old religion and his recognition of its divine character would be perfectly sincere, and he only would not insist upon what he thought would for the present do more harm than good. And this, if it had been Jesus' attitude, we now are in a position to see would have been the only thing for him to do. One cannot teach truth by stating it in so many words ; such a statement is worse than useless unless the hearer can be made to see the basis upon which the truth rests, the reason for it. And how impossible it would have been to make the disciples understand this, we can guess from the fact that even that which formed the centre of Jesus' teaching and which continually he was insisting on, the kingdom of heaven as a kingdom of righteousness, the disciples never more than half understood.

The great mistake of later Judaism lay in the fact

that it was a religion based almost wholly upon an outward revelation in the past, the religion of a book. God, it was thought, had given a certain number of rules which men were to observe, not because there was anything in the rules themselves which claimed their obedience, but because God had commanded them; and in this Law religion was contained. It was not until comparatively late times that the elaboration of these rules reached such a height that they became an intolerable burden; then the scribes, by an endless hair-splitting, had drawn from the more general commands in the Old Testament applications to almost every conceivable case, and each of these was just as binding as if it had been expressly stated in the Law. But we must not overlook the fact that the same thing was to be found in the Old Testament itself, although there it was not yet carried to such absurd lengths. The ritual legislation, the distinction between what was clean and what was not clean, were already laid down in the Law with wearisome detail, and were recognized as binding in just the same degree as the moral requirements. And the casuistry of later times was a necessary result of this, for puzzling cases must constantly be arising, and then men had to have some rule to follow. Doubtless this strictness in guarding the Law was not without its advantages, but the essential defect of it all, as we have said, was the attempt to make religion depend upon external authority. God, it was thought, might command what he pleased, and that the rules were quite arbitrary, that they had no moral quality in the least, counted for nothing against the fact that God had commanded them. To abstain from pork was just as much a command of God as to abstain from murder, and from this the step was not a



very long one that the one was as important as the other ; it was a mistake which the prophets had foreseen, and into which the nation as a whole gradually but surely fell. What right had men to make any distinction between God's commands? Were they not all equally important? And so the distinction between moral duties and ritual duties grew weaker and weaker. Injustice would tend to become a crime, not because it was unjust, but because it was forbidden ; and consequently, if one could be unjust, and still could keep within the letter of the law, he had nothing to fear. And it was just to this that Judaism came. The letter of the Law was everything, the spirit very little ; men might seize upon the pretext of a religious duty to neglect the duty which they owed their parents. And quite as naturally was the Pharisaic self-sufficiency, his utter lack of humility and of sympathy with his fellows, the result of this tendency. When duty is made a matter of the heart no man is likely to come so close to his ideal that he is greatly inclined to pride himself upon his attainments. But with the Pharisees religious duty was a perfectly definite thing, not too far out of the reach of a careful man. He was not to commit murder—well, that was not a very hard task : angry thoughts he did not concern himself much about. He had certain definite things to avoid, certain definite washings and sacrifices to go through, and every now and then he might well look back upon a day in which he had walked with well-nigh perfect uprightness.

Now was this in any way Jesus' attitude towards the Law? did he think of the Law as something which in its smallest prescriptions was of divine authority, which in its ritual was always to be binding upon the



citizens of the new kingdom? As has been said already, we cannot expect that Jesus will answer this question directly, and we only can judge of what his answer would be by the indications which he lets fall. And to begin with, Jesus does not speak of his teaching as the revival of old truth which had become neglected, he speaks of it as something new. It is new wine that cannot be contained in old bottles; the personal element in his teaching—I say unto you—he constantly is making prominent; the scribe who is instructed into the kingdom is neither to neglect the former things nor to make them all-important, he is to bring forth from his store-house things new and old. Now this, by itself, if we consider it, is really a setting aside of the old point of view; the Law no longer is the perfect standard, and instead of being judged by it, Jesus judges the Law. The one who is but little in the kingdom which Jesus announces is greater than the greatest who came before him, greater, therefore, than Moses himself, who gave the Law. And this principle Jesus does not hesitate to put in practice. The Law grants divorce, Jesus says that divorce is not to be granted; the Law permits retaliation, and Jesus forbids it: the authority, the perfect straightforwardness with which Jesus does this, shows that however sacred the Law was to him, it was not the simple fact that a command was in the Law which made it sacred, but that he had a standard by which even the Law was to be measured. And still more significant is the silence of Jesus. In Jesus' controversies with the Pharisees he once or twice directly opposes a precept of the Law, but ordinarily he does not do this. On the contrary, he opposes the law to the later tradition, which the Pharisees observed, and even when

he is arguing against divorce, he does this by an appeal to another passage in the Law. But while in this Jesus seems to argue as the scribes might have argued, it is remarkable that he never appeals to anything which does not have a direct moral significance, and which does not carry its own authority with it. This is indeed the value which expressly he sets upon the Old Testament, its power for righteousness. Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them,—this is to him the Law and the prophets. That which sums up everything is love to God and love to one's neighbor ; judgment, mercy, truth, these are the weightier matters of the Law. And the utter absence of any reference to circumcision, to the performance of ritual duties, is really decisive against them. If, when other men were insisting upon these, Jesus planted himself squarely upon righteousness, and made righteousness the sole condition, we hardly can think that it was an oversight on Jesus' part, or that he did not see the bearing of his own teachings.

And fortunately we have several instances where, in a less general way, Jesus shows what his real attitude was, and first is his teaching in reference to the Sabbath. Jesus' argument was directed against Rabbinical subtilties, and it had no direct reference to the Old Testament at all ; but really it tells nearly as strongly against the priestly views of the Sabbath which we find in the Old Testament, as it does against the Rabbis. And that Jesus was not unaware of this, we might gather from the illustration which he gives about the shew-bread. "Have ye not read what David did, when he was an hungred, and they that were with him ; how he entered into the house of God, and did eat the shew-bread, which it was not lawful for him to

eat, neither for them that were with him, but only for the priests?" Here certainly it is a violation of the Law which Jesus justifies, and if this illustration proves that the Rabbinical rule may be broken, it proves just as clearly that the rule about shew-bread may be broken also without offence to God. The argument can scarcely be simply that in a case of great necessity God's commandment may be overborne. This of itself would compel one to go further and to make distinctions, for surely Jesus never would have justified this in the case of the "weightier matters" of the Law; and besides, in this case, the need of the disciples seems by no means to have been great, and so such a consideration would not be suggested by the incident. Really it seems to lead to this, that requirements of this sort which have no moral significance, cannot be the immutable, the eternal will of God, and so cannot have that sanction which the Pharisees asserted. We might appeal also to the way in which Jesus bases forgiveness of sins altogether upon moral grounds, without any reference to offerings or sacrifices. But what is most decisive is the attitude which he shows towards ceremonial cleanness. "There is nothing," he says, "from without that entering into a man can defile him, but the things which come out from a man, these defile the man." Here, too, the argument is directed in the first place against the traditional additions to the Law, and we may doubt whether the explanation of the saying which the Gospels give really came from Jesus. But there can be no doubt that the explanation is the true one, and whatever Jesus' reference may have been, the argument applies just as decisively to the Old Testament regulations with regard to clean and unclean food. Did

Jesus, with all his clear-sightedness, fail to see this? did he think that the principle which he sets down clearly and without limitation applies to the traditions of the Rabbis, and ceases to apply when it come in contact with the Law? if Jesus fails to make this distinction for himself, we do not feel justified in making it for him.

Taken altogether, these indications give a pretty clear account of what Jesus' position was. There are three attitudes, any one of which it is conceivable he might have taken. He might have set everything in the Law squarely on the same basis, so far as its obligatoriness went, or he might have put the supreme value of the Law on its power for righteousness. And in this latter case again, he might or he might not have recognized all that his position implied. For since the Law does actually consist of a mixture of absolute principles with much that is arbitrary and that has very little to do with righteousness, it would be quite possible for one, taking only the grand sweep of the book into his account, to lay the great emphasis upon the principles which do indeed run through it, and still not go the length of rejecting out and out the other elements which it contains, but, without scrutinizing carefully the basis of their authority, accept them as a matter of fact, and then simply suffer them to drop into the background. This is the attitude which to-day is adopted widely with reference to the Bible; everything that is in the Bible is claimed to be divine, but the stress is laid upon the general trend of the Book, and what is inconsistent with this general trend is practically ignored. We have tried to show that not only did Jesus not take the first position, but that in looking at the Law as a power for righteousness

and not as a legal code, he recognized that this meant in time the falling away of much that was in the Law itself, the rooting up of everything the heavenly Father had not planted. There are, however, in our Gospels, several sayings which tend to disprove this position though some of these are found in passages which for other reasons have already been rejected. And of the two which remain one must be given up without hesitation, the passage in which Jesus exhorts the people to observe the tradition of the elders. Not only is this utterly opposed to the rest of Jesus' teaching, but the critical reasons against it are unusually strong. The whole passage by which Matthew introduces the woes against the Pharisees seems to be a literary combination. The address changes in an impossible way from the people to the disciples, and then to the Pharisees. The accusation against the scribes, that they give no help to those whom they load with burdens, as it seems originally to have been, becomes an accusation that they do not bear these burdens themselves, and this historically seems not to have been true. Then Mark's parallel account is inserted, and five verses follow, two of which we still have in their original connection in the source from which both Luke and Matthew drew, while the other three, the prohibition of titles, apparently are of a later origin. It hardly was necessary to warn Galilean fishermen against accepting the title of Rabbi; the Christ is spoken of in a very objective way, and the position which he is given is the later theological one; and the whole spirit of the prohibition does not suggest Jesus, who himself accepted the title of Rabbi and teacher without demur. The discourse may originally have opened with the verse which gives its motive, "Ye shut the kingdom of heaven against



men." The other passage, however, of which we spoke, and which is found at the beginning of the Sermon on the Mount, deserves a more elaborate treatment.

"Think not," says Jesus, "that I came to destroy the Law or the prophets: I came not to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass away from the Law, till all things be accomplished. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven." If Jesus really spoke these words, they settle at once his position in regard to the Law, for it does not seem possible legitimately to get any other meaning out of them than what appears on the surface. Critics who have not wished to admit this, have tried to give a different turn to them: Professor Bruce, for example, has explained them merely as a protest against a hasty and irreverent setting aside of these time-honored requirements, against the negative spirit, the spirit of iconoclasm; and others see in them only a highly figurative assertion of the perpetuity of the Law in its grand and essential features. But, however one may try to persuade himself of this, as soon as he comes back to the words themselves he must feel that his explanations are not perfectly natural ones. If Jesus had wished to say that the Law, in its entirety, was to be perpetually valid, could he have used any stronger words than these, or indeed any very different words? Till heaven and earth pass, not the smallest letter shall pass from the Law; the very least commandment it is forbidden to set aside. It seems to us that these words are to be



taken naturally, upon the face of them, in their literal sense. If an American orator, in talking of the Constitution, were to say, Not a letter shall be altered while the country stands, and he who disputes the smallest provision that it contains is a traitor, we should not naturally suppose him to mean only that the Constitution was a work of broad-minded statesmanship, embodying excellent political principles, but not necessarily adapted in its details to the future; because the Constitution carries to us, just as the Law carried to the Jew, the idea of a definite document. Now suppose that when Jesus says neither jot nor tittle is to pass away, he can mean simply that the ethical standard of the Law shall not be lowered a particle, can he mean this when he speaks of the least commandment? Commandments are commandments, not principles; instead of looking at the Law as an ethical standard and so ignoring its legal side, he here uses the very expression which points to definite prescriptions. The word "least" emphasizes this reference. We know what Jesus meant by the lesser matters of the Law; what can this least commandment mean but the ceremonial precepts as well? And another reason against this interpretation lies in the fact that Jesus' hearers could not have understood him to have this meaning, and must even have understood him very differently. The Pharisees were accusing Jesus, not in the least of lowering the ethical standard of the Law, but of breaking its ceremonial requirements. It is true that in their minds the accent was not upon the "ceremonial," but upon the "Law," for to them the Law was a whole; nevertheless, it was really to the Law as ceremonial that their complaint had reference. If now to this state of mind Jesus had addressed such words as these,

they only could have been understood in one sense, that the Law, as the Jews understood it, was to be perpetually valid. So that Jesus lays himself open to the charge intentionally of using words liable to be misunderstood, in order to defend himself against the charge of his enemies. And even granting he meant to be understood in the less obvious way, and that his hearers so understood him, there is the further difficulty that he is begging the whole question, for in ignoring the Law as a legal code, he is ignoring the very point which the Pharisees made against him.

For these reasons we cannot convince ourselves that the words are meant to be understood other than in their literal sense, so that if Jesus really spoke them, he is here expressly denying the position which we have attributed to him. But did Jesus really speak these words? if he did speak them, then they stand alone among his sayings, they are contrary to what there are strong reasons for thinking was Jesus' real belief; and this is enough to make them very doubtful. And the passage as an interpolation is easily explained. The question of the Law was a most important one in the early Church, and some Jewish copyist, meeting with the words of Jesus, "I came not to destroy, but to fulfil," may well have thought he was only carrying out and expounding Jesus' meaning, in opposition to the Paulinists, by this note which he added. This moreover explains the emphasis which is laid upon *teaching* that the Law is abrogated, a thing which seems to imply the actual controversy in the Church; whereas Jesus, in a discourse relating wholly to personal conduct, would not have been likely to bring in this allusion to a future error of doctrine. What, however, is most decisive is the fact that we can still detect

in our passage a mixture of two entirely distinct points of view. "Think not," says Jesus, "that I came to destroy the Law or the prophets: I came not to destroy, but to fulfil." Now what does this sentence fairly imply? Does it not imply that there was something in Jesus' teaching which seemed to a superficial view an abrogation of the Law? Why otherwise should it occur to them to think that he had come to destroy? But, says Jesus, this is not so: even when I seem to destroy I am really bringing out the true, the hidden principle which the Law strove to express in a partial, a tentative way. But in the verses which follow, the verses let us notice where all the critical difficulty occurs, the point of view suddenly changes, and we have a man to whom the Law is everything, who clings passionately to the smallest letter as well, and will not endure the least change in it. And with this first point of view, not with the second, the sayings which follow agree. "I came not," says Jesus, "to destroy, but to fulfil"; and then he goes on to show how this fulfilment is to be brought about; instead of a command against murder, no angry feelings, instead of a command against adultery, no lustful desires, instead of strict justice, mercy, instead of partial love, love which is complete.

If this interpretation is correct then, it is a clear statement of the attitude which we have attributed to Jesus. The idea had already got afloat that Jesus was for breaking down the Law, and in answer to this he declares that he has no mind to destroy but to complete. But this very statement implies that Jesus recognized the incompleteness of the Law, and in showing how this incompleteness is to be remedied he points out in detail some of the defects he has in his

thought. It would not touch the general position of Jesus, although that position would not be so distinctly stated in the present passage, if these words actually were spoken, as some have thought, with the practice of the Pharisees particularly in view, and not the teaching of the Law. The evidence, however, seems to us to go against this theory. The word *πληρῶσαι* might in the connection have any one of three meanings. It might mean that Jesus had come to fulfil the Law in the sense that a prophecy might be fulfilled, by doing what had been looked forward to and in a sense foretold when the Law was given; or it might mean that Jesus was to exhibit in his own life a perfect realization of the Law; or that, as we have held, he came to complete it, to fill it with a fuller meaning. As for the first theory, which is a popular one, that Jesus by his death was to fulfil the Old Testament ritual and so do away with it, it only need be mentioned in passing. Whoever holds this theory will probably not be willing to reject the following verses, and so it may be pointed out that one does not talk about heaven and earth passing if he only means a year or so; and besides it was only after Jesus' death that what he forbids could occur, the teaching that some of the Law was no longer binding. Between the other two meanings there are several considerations which decide in favor of the last one. In the first place "complete" is a better contrast to "destroy" than "perform completely" is: to "destroy the Law" and to "complete the Law," that is, are both to produce certain modifying and external effects upon the Law itself. Moreover, it is something quite anomalous in Jesus' teaching, if he lays the stress upon his own perfect life, and not upon the perfection

of the truth which he brings ; Jesus elsewhere never transgresses the virtue of humility when his own personal character is concerned. And it also stands alone in the discourse in which it is found, for throughout the Sermon Jesus does not again call attention to himself ; whereas if the word means " to complete," it stands in an intimate connection with the sayings which follow. Jesus says that he has come to complete the Law, and then he goes on immediately to show how this completion is to be brought about. The obvious connection between these two sections, when they are interpreted in such a way, goes far to show that the interpretation is a true one.

If therefore *πληρῶσαι* is to be translated " to complete " the law, it is almost certain that in the succeeding verses Jesus has the Law direct in mind, and not simply Pharisaic perversions of the Law. There are arguments indeed for this last alternative. The phraseology which Jesus uses, it is argued, "*ye have heard* that it hath been said," instead of "*ye have read*," points to the teaching prevalent in the synagogue ; and the illustrations which follow are thought to show the Pharisaic temper in a slavish clinging to the letter, and a refusal to enter into the spirit of the old command. And particularly this would be the case with the injunction, not simply to love one's neighbor, but to hate one's enemy as well. But the first argument is weakened by the fact that while Jesus naturally would say "*ye have read*," in addressing Pharisees and Rabbis, he just as naturally would say, "*ye have heard*," when he had to do with uneducated listeners, who had got the most of their knowledge by word of mouth. Moreover, "*I say unto you*" is better contrasted with "*it hath been said*" than with "*ye have heard*" ; and the very fact



that the Old Testament is mentioned at all is enough to show that Jesus had it in his mind. If Jesus had been thinking of the Pharisees' teaching he would probably have put it, "ye have heard it said," and not "ye have heard that Moses said." And as for the other objection, we have already indicated that we think the last clause is to be thrown out ; and besides it is in no wise probable that the Pharisees, any more than the Law itself, made hatred of enemies an express theological tenet in their synagogue teaching. And if this clause is dropped all the illustrations are then based directly upon the Old Testament, and Jesus' teaching is just as truly an advance upon the Law as it is upon the Pharisees' interpretation. To be sure Jesus considers that he is only carrying out principles which really lie at the basis of the Old Testament regulations, and which any one, if he had insight enough, might extract from them, but this does not alter the fact that in reality the Law had stopped half-way, and failed to carry out the principles to their true conclusion.

To sum up, therefore, once again, Jesus occupies himself first and foremost with the positive value of the Law for righteousness. He says nothing against ritual, because in itself ritual may be a good thing ; he simply ignores it, and by ignoring it he denies its authority. A perfect illustration of what Jesus' method was we find in a lesser question, the matter of fasting. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus recognizes fasting as a legitimate form of religious exercise, and he assumes that his disciples will practise it. But when the Pharisees are for making it a religious rule, a thing of divine appointment, Jesus refuses to submit to this. "Can ye make the children of the bride-chamber fast so long as the bridegroom is with them ? But the days will



come in which the bridegroom shall be taken from them, and then shall they fast." Fasting may be a good thing, he has nothing to say against it ; but it only is good when it is a perfectly natural expression of religious feeling, and any attempt to make it more than this, to make it an obligation, Jesus steadily resists.





## CHAPTER V.

### JESUS' DOCTRINE OF GOD AND MAN.

THE religious conception of Jesus, which he embodied in his one comprehensive doctrine of the kingdom of heaven, gathers itself about two main centres, which modern thought indeed has often tried to show have no essential connection with one another, but which in Jesus' mind were closely bound together, and each of which played a necessary part in making up the final harmony of his view of the world. These two central conceptions were, on the one side his doctrine of God, and on the other side his strong realization of the obligation and the beauty of righteous character, and his sense of the pre-eminent dignity and value which it lent to every being who was capable of attaining to it. Indeed it was the very intensity of these two beliefs which brought it about that there were no more, which kept Jesus' doctrine so admirably simple, and enabled him to let go of the swarm of half-religious conceptions which filled the creeds of his time. For the most part it is not men of deep religious feeling whom we expect will be the first to see the insufficiency of the prevalent forms into which religious truth has become cast. The very vividness of their religious insight invests the forms as well as the inner

reality, unless these forms are morally unworthy as well, with a sacredness which keeps them from seeing the deficiencies. It often happens that the very defects of a man's mind are of use to him in discovering the negative aspects of truth. It is his insensibility to what is really of value in an inadequate conception which enables him to disentangle the knot which holds the true and the false elements together, and to see wherein the inadequacy consists. It only is in supreme minds that the intensity and white heat of real and positive truth serves this same purpose, and crumbles away everything that has the least element of weakness in it. And it was in this, rather than in the critical way, that Jesus' mind acted.

Jesus' doctrine of God is not a product of philosophizing, but the outcome of a real personal need and of a direct insight. Jesus never reasons about the existence of God, but he simply assumes it. It was in an atmosphere of belief in God that he grew up, and there was but little in the influences which were brought to bear upon him which could tend to call up the philosophic doubts of modern times. Atheism, if real atheism there was at all, in the circle in which Jesus moved, was only the wilful disbelief of the wicked man to whom the thought of God was distasteful. But the influence which this belief has over Jesus is not due to the fact that he had been taught to believe it, for he had been taught to believe other things which he afterwards came to set aside; it is due to its meeting and satisfying the deepest needs in Jesus' own nature. Accordingly he has not simply taken up the conception as it came to him, but he has modified it very essentially in accordance with his own personal genius. The God of Jesus is both more com-

prehensive and more human than the God of Judaism. The latter was essentially a being throned outside the world, whose direct relationship to men was spasmodic and supernatural. But to Jesus this was too cold a conception. He had too keen a sense for the color and life of external nature, to be willing that this should be shut off from the all-pervading influence of the divine working. Accordingly to him the universe is filled with God ; God is immanent in nature, if we may give a somewhat modern tinge to the statement. He clothes the lily and directs the sparrow's fall, with impartial beneficence he sends his rain on the evil and on the good. Whether Jesus was perfectly consistent in following this out it is very difficult to say. Strictly it would do away with the Jewish belief in Satan and a host of evil spirits who exert an influence on earthly matters ; but there is not enough evidence to show whether Jesus went so far as to reject this view altogether. It is true that the Gospels attribute to him clearly enough a belief in Satan and in demons, but the great bulk of these passages are dubious in the extreme. The passage in which he defends himself against the accusation of the Pharisees, and the parable of the demoniac, are the only clear pieces of evidence, and these do not settle the question the one way or the other. In the first instance he confessedly is adopting the standpoint of his opponents, and in any case his habit of mind is so picturesque that he naturally would be led to make use of a popular belief which lent itself so readily to vivid description. And the parable of the demoniac in particular, with its demons roaming restlessly about in the dry places, and coming back to their home to find it empty, swept, and garnished, impresses us as decidedly not being a literal attempt

to give Jesus' ideas about devils. And if the popular views of the habits of evil spirits Jesus regarded merely as a bit of poetry with which to give color to a parable, the probability is that he did not stop here. Moreover, it may be noticed that Jesus ordinarily places the source of evil with the man himself, in the human heart. The good man out of the good treasure brings forth good things, and the evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth evil things. If in the Sermon on the Mount Jesus speaks of the evil one as a source of evil, this also may be only a natural use of an ordinary conception ; and the very fact that it is decidedly uncertain whether the word is a masculine or a neuter goes to show that he did not have the thought of an evil personality clearly fixed before his mind.

A much more important modification, however, of the common doctrine of God was that which had to do with the personal relations between God and men. We are become so used to the phrase, the Fatherhood of God, that we fail sometimes to realize all the meaning that it carries with it. It is the final and definite rejection of all that is barbarous and arbitrary in the idea of God. It means the coming over to religion of the mightily transforming power of love. God is no longer a being to propitiate, to serve with fear and trembling lest he be angry ; religion does not consist in the careful avoiding of a multitude of things which a stern law-giver has forbidden ; but God himself is the first to offer forgiveness to his erring children, and the knowledge that it is God's will that is being done gives a new joy and incentive to action. Worship accordingly ceases to be the perfunctory thing which Judaism had made of it. No longer something which God commands for his own glory, it is the unforced outpouring of the

worshipper's heart to one whose goodness he adores and whose loving aid he is sure of before he asks for it. Since, therefore, God is not a God outside the world, but constantly is working in it, since all things depend upon the will of God and carry out his loving purposes, Jesus could teach his disciples perfect trust in God even in the material things of this life, and could warn them against the anxiety which could see no overlooking Providence caring for the affairs of men. It certainly would be a mistake to interpret this as if Jesus were an impractical idealist who would have his followers leave the solid ground of reality and live in the visionary realm where the question of bread and butter no longer called for any thought or interest. This would show an unwarrantable neglect to make allowance for the character of Jesus' style. In reality it is the same thought which Paul expresses in less picturesque language, that all things work together for good to them that love God. Doubtless even then the doctrine is difficult for us to hold with the absolute confidence with which Jesus gave expression to it. Nevertheless, if the world is not a bad world, if goodness and joy do in the last analysis lie at the basis of it, such a belief is no fool's dream with which to cheat ourselves, but a faith which is well founded, even though there is much that seems to go against it; and the fact that we often seem to ourselves to be losing this faith, is only because we do not see so clearly as Jesus did the divineness of the world. And when this unfaith takes the form of anxious worryings, of continual absorption in the grosser things of life so that the higher powers of the soul have no opportunity left them for action, then it becomes an unmitigated evil, and deserves all the warning that Jesus directs against



it. In connection with this also is to be considered Jesus' doctrine of prayer. Jesus encourages his followers to bring their needs to God, and ask for his assistance, and the assurance that their prayers will be heard he bases upon the fact of God's love, which always is working for the best good of his children. It would seem from a few passages that Jesus meant by this what a later and somewhat mechanical interpretation has supposed him to mean, that prayer is an instrument for forcing from God directly a definite, and, if need be, miraculous answer, but this is opposed to the whole trend of Jesus' teaching, and to his constant exaltation of the will of God. And there is after all no good support for such a view, for the saying about a sycamore tree removed and planted in the sea, when it is taken out of its secondary connection in the story of the barren fig-tree, is clearly a highly figurative expression ; and the saying about the efficiency of prayer which appears in the discourse about offences, has in all probability been treated very freely by Matthew and Mark alike, so that we cannot reckon on its original form. And Jesus' own prayer which has come down to us shows what form it was he meant that petitions for material blessings should take, and how it was based upon the deeper conviction of the beneficent working of God in the material world.

The doctrine of God which Jesus held undoubtedly gave a deeper and more abiding sanction to his insistence on righteousness. It gives in the first place the assurance that efforts for righteousness will not prove impotent, and that goodness has enlisted on its side the power which is supreme, and so is sure to conquer in the end. Moreover it brings the motive of loving gratitude into play ; Jesus could say, as in effect he

did say, The love of God which he has shown to you, and which you owe to him, makes it incumbent on you, if you are not to be self-convicted of ingratitude, to work all the harder to accomplish God's will for you. But it probably is neither on the authority of God, nor on the love of God, though both these motives go to swell the stream, that Jesus rests ultimately the obligation of right-doing. Here again Jesus does not go upon philosophy, but on insight ; he does not reason that such and such a thing is right, but he assumes that when it is pointed out to them all men will recognize its obligation. He goes on authority, as the Jews did, but it is on the authority of the moral insight rather than on the authority of external commands. And the supreme value of his teaching about righteousness lies in the marvellous lucidity of his vision, and the unerring touch with which he settles upon just the principles which continued experience and modern scrutiny tend to establish most firmly and securely.

One of the most noticeable features which this introduced into Jesus' teaching was the supreme importance and value which he attached to the individual. This was due, in part, to his keen sympathies with the sorrows and misery of men, and to the clearing away of all artificial distinctions and harsh, unloving judgments which his perception of the love of God would necessarily bring about. When Jesus came with the announcement, Blessed are the poor, blessed are the sorrowful, when he turned to the publicans and harlots, he struck, in a very large measure, a new note in religion. The old religion of Israel had been a religion for the nation ; Jesus' religion was a religion for the man, and not for the wise man alone, nor for the strong man. Blessed are the poor, blessed are they that mourn ; not

because they are poor, but because poverty is no longer to debar them from their manhood ; not because they mourn, but because comfort is within their reach. And his perception that righteousness is not something to be brought about in the lump, but that each man must win it for himself in his own character, went also to make him turn his efforts, first of all, to the individual. He made no attempt to found an organization in the strict sense of the word. It was in the disciples' hands that the keys of the kingdom were placed, to bind or loose, as the Spirit should direct them. Into questions of politics he declined to enter : "Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and to God the things that are God's," was his answer to the eternal problem of his contemporaries as to what relation the people of God should bear towards the Roman power. And in this reserve of Jesus, in this devotion to a single end, there lay one great secret of his success. Jesus sometimes has been blamed because he did not throw himself more into the social and political questions of the day, because he did not leave us his views upon philanthropy and government and the manifold questions, important no doubt, which call for a solution from society. But such a criticism is short-sighted. If Jesus had done this he might have been a great reformer, but he never could have been the teacher and the saviour of the world ; if he had worked directly for institutions and for social organizations, he must have accommodated himself to the conditions by which he was surrounded, and have given up all thought of universal truth. For institutions cannot well be established on such a basis, they must be content, not with the best, but with the best that can be had ; and most of all this would have been so in Jesus' day. So that,

do the best he could, he must still have left the future to solve its own problems. But while social questions are relative, the principles which are to control the individual in all relations, the motives which are to govern his conduct, are, in large measure, absolute and universal; and it is upon these, after all, that social questions rest. It is only when the man is transformed, as Jesus tried to transform him, that the solution of social questions first becomes possible.

What the ideal was which Jesus set as the goal of human attainment, one cannot get more clearly before him than by reading the words of Jesus himself as they are recorded in the Gospels. No paraphrase of them can convey half so vivid an impression. Nevertheless, without trying to make a complete statement of it, a few of the more prominent points may here be noticed. In the first place, as has been mentioned already, Jesus places the sphere of a man's religious activity first and foremost in the ordinary and every-day relations of the present life. It is true that he puts love to God before love to man, because, in his view of it, love to God is the more comprehensive of the two and implies the other at the same time that it insures its completeness and permanence. But religion ordinarily goes beyond this, and puts an equally high value upon the more purely formal phases of the relationship between God and man. The forms of worship accordingly, the observance of a certain number of acts by which custom has settled it that the existence of a Divine Being shall be recognized, whatever in fact has come to be closely associated with the bare name of God, is looked upon as in a special degree the property of religion, and the tendency is that it should be regarded as exclusively so. Nowadays, for instance, there are many to

whom it seems that keeping a specified time holy to God, attending a prayer-meeting, bearing testimony in a religious gathering, are religious acts *par excellence*; so that a man even may be a thoroughly religious man, whose life is wholly selfish, or upon whose word his neighbors cannot rely. Not only does this have a bad effect in deadening and formalizing those acts upon which the stress is laid, but what is much worse, it confines religion to a very restricted and inadequate field, and makes it indifferent, or even antagonistic, to what to the majority of men must always be the larger and the more interesting part of life. Jesus is far from making any such a limitation. The sphere of religion is co-extensive with the sphere of human conduct. Religionism, as opposed to righteousness, Jesus mercilessly condemns in its typical representatives, the Pharisees. Nothing Godward is of the least avail if it is not backed and fortified by the practical religion of neighborly love. The gift is to be left unhesitatingly upon the altar till the reconciliation is brought about, for not till then will the worship be accepted.

Closely akin to this, there is the avoidance in Jesus' ideal of the fault which is distinctively a religious fault, and which to a deeply religious mind has a peculiar charm, the tendency to asceticism. It is true that there are a few passages which have been thought to show just this tendency in Jesus, but there is the whole spirit of his sayings to set over against these. Nothing is more evident from Jesus' words taken as a whole than the genialness of the man, his ready sympathy with all the varied forms of popular life, his quick eye for nature and his keen delight in natural beauty. Moreover, so far was he from adopting in his own mode of life the ascetic habit, and such a



contrast was he to the austere and gloomy John, that it offered a handle to the Pharisees for their taunt of glutton and winebibber. This is really decisive as to the tone which characterized Jesus, and there is nothing that can be brought up on the other side that is sufficient to make one come to any different conclusion. To be sure Jesus does recognize the disparity in the value of things, that what is good may not be what is best, and he insists upon the supreme obligation of what is highest and noblest. Jesus recognizes too that even good things may by force of circumstance become an evil, and then, he says, get rid of them at whatever cost. "If thy hand or thy foot cause thee to stumble, cut them off and cast them from thee." But this is far from saying that a hand is not in itself a pre-eminent desirable thing, or that its loss does not leave one maimed and imperfect. In the matter of wealth, to take the example which is most often brought up against Jesus, he declares, what is a simple matter of fact, that it is hard for the rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven, that the eager pursuit of wealth, and the lassitude which comes with the possession of wealth, do not naturally, in the case of the average man, make for a temper of mind to which devotion to the higher interests and capacities, to the things of the kingdom of heaven, as Jesus puts it, is of supreme importance. But while Jesus requires everything to be made tributary to the service of God, to be held in readiness, that is, to be used as love to God and love to man, and not selfish interest, may demand, there is nothing to show that he thought of imposing any hard and fast program on his followers, according to which they were literally to give up what they possessed. The sayings which seem to imply this are most of



them due to Luke, who doubtless himself had some such notion.

Still less is there any reason to suppose that Jesus saw anything unworthy in the marriage relation ; on the contrary he gives to it all the sacredness which comes from a divine sanction. It probably is of himself that he is thinking when he speaks to his disciples of those who have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake. It was because his work was to him before all things sacred, and because nothing else had the right to interfere with this, that he himself had never married. But he expressly states this, not as a general rule, but as something which exceptional circumstances, which each one must judge of for himself, may make best for a man ; and one may even catch a note of wistful sadness in the saying, as if Jesus knew in himself that a "eunuch for the kingdom of heaven's sake" was something to which one's natural inclinations did not lead, but which one must "make himself," an attainment not naturally or easily come by. The only passage which really seems to show a different temper is the saying to a would-be follower, when he asked permission first to go and bury his father. This on the surface does not show the mild and sympathetic spirit of Jesus, and if the circumstances were no more nor less than those which are reported, the harshness of Jesus is scarcely to be defended. Nevertheless it is not difficult to suppose that if we knew just the facts of the case the words of Jesus would have a different complexion, and some such modifying circumstances perhaps we may conjecture, so as to bring the passage into harmony with the rest of Jesus' sayings. The similar incident with which Luke follows this is still more foreign to Jesus'

character, and Luke's authority is not enough to create any presumption in favor of its genuineness.

Joyfulness is therefore a conspicuous thing in the character of him who has been instructed into the kingdom of heaven. Jesus' religion is something decidedly cheerful and hopeful. Blessedness is the keynote to it, the children of the bride-chamber perforce must rejoice, it is like to hid treasure for the eager delight of possession. Of late, it has been rather the fashion to be suspicious of happiness as a motive, and only to find those actions deserving of respect which have no taint of recompense in any way attached to them, but which are based solely on a stern and stoical sense of duty. And it is true, of course, that when our happiness is the end we have direct in view, it is only selfishness we are acting out, however it may be disguised. Nevertheless the paradox always remains that happiness must have its part in a completed ideal of humanity, and that, without usurping the place of supreme importance, its influence must nevertheless be felt indirectly throughout the whole range of human activity, by giving a tinge of hopefulness, and by guarding against any gloomy and despairing view of life, such as it is inevitable will weaken the springs of action in the larger part of mankind. Popular religion is apt to err in the direction of a more or less thinly disguised selfishness, by the emphasis which it lays upon the idea of reward in another life. Jesus guards against both faults, at once by the balance which he maintains between the two motives of a desire for happiness and a naked sense of duty, and partly also by the nature of the happiness which he promises. It is not often, when Jesus is urging some definite duty upon men, that we find him making much appeal to

the desire for happiness ; he prefers that they should make their fight and gain their victory as much as possible on the lines of simple right and wrong. And on the other hand he does not tell his disciples that the desire to be happy is something selfish and culpable, but he dwells just enough upon this desire, and the certainty of its accomplishment, to keep men from despondency, and to fill them with a general cheeriness and healthfulness of moral tone which shall stand them in the time of actual struggle. And besides this the joy which Jesus promises is less frequently the somewhat external and arbitrary reward which makes the most appeal to self-seeking, than the more delicate and quiet joy which lies wrapped up in right-doing itself, the joy of generosity, of self-sacrifice, of helpfulness towards men and peace with God. For in its practical working such a reward is no subtle bait to entice men to goodness, but only after the spirit of sacrifice has been won by a joyless struggle does the joy which it brings become a real and living motive, capable of influencing to action.

Another characteristic of the ideal of life which Jesus sets up is the way in which he goes to the bottom of things, and devotes his attention to the inner springs of action rather than to outward conduct alone. When it is said that Jesus' teaching had chiefly to do with morality, the assertion is apt to meet with disapproval in certain circles at the present day, in consequence of the fact that the word morality, in its religious use, has come to have a somewhat anomalous meaning. The moral man, in religious language, is the man just with a veneer of decency, which prevents him from getting into the penitentiary, but which does not come from the fulness of life and character within.

It is this too external conception of what righteousness is, which has done much in keeping up the interminable discussions as to the relative value of faith and works in a man's salvation, and which has been the truth at the bottom of the constant contention of religious teachers, that morality alone will not save a man. Now Jesus does away at once with the whole ground of dispute by basing salvation not upon conduct, but upon character. When a man gets so that he not only does right but loves right, when he not merely keeps from committing murder but has no disposition to be angry with his neighbor, when he no longer simply keeps his lust from mastering him in outward acts but is absolutely pure in heart, there is no higher salvation than this, the growth of a man into the divine character. And this is the goal which Jesus constantly has in view, and than which he is satisfied with nothing less.

The principle which lies at the bottom of the demands which Jesus makes of the citizen of the new kingdom may be summed up in the one word, *unselfishness*. No longer is each man to make of his own petty self the centre of the universe, and toil and plan for his own individual interests first of all ; he must recognize that beside him stands his brother, whose welfare and interests have just as great a value as his own, and that his true life consists, not in living to himself alone, but in the larger and freer life of the whole, where individual interests are seen with the truer vision of universal love. Without trying to follow Jesus out in all the applications which he makes of this principle, we may close with a brief examination of the doctrine which illustrates it in the most thorough-going way, and which is altogether one of the most original ele-

ments in Jesus' ethical teaching, his doctrine of retaliation. Jesus' expression of this doctrine has sometimes been found to furnish difficulty, chiefly because enough attention has not been paid to his ordinary manner of teaching. What does Jesus mean? When one injures us, are we actually to invite him to repeat the injury? Are wrongs absolutely to go unpunished. Is universal and unquestioning giving what Jesus would have? At once we feel the difficulty of this, and we see how dangerous it might become if it were faithfully carried out. But it is evident that this is not what Jesus meant, evident from the very sermon of which the passage on retaliation is a part. It is the foundation of Jesus' teaching that he insists on principles rather than on particular applications. He does not say to men, Under these circumstances do so and so; under those circumstances act in the opposite way; but he shows the motive which is to guide them, whatever the circumstances may happen to be, because he recognizes that no man can possibly prescribe to his neighbor just what his actions ought to be, but at best can only give him the clue which will enable him to decide for himself. So in this sermon it is Jesus' special aim to get back of the particular requirements of the old law to the underlying principles, and this very purpose he would have defeated if he had only substituted other special requirements instead. Only, instead of putting these principles in an abstract form, he chooses some concrete example to illustrate them in a striking and even at times exaggerated way, that they may strike home upon the imaginations of his hearers. But he no more means that of necessity we are to turn the other cheek to the one who strikes us, than that we are actually to pluck out the eye or sever the limb which



causes us to stumble. What then, is the principle which by these examples he is trying to express?

We have seen the thing that Jesus does not mean : he does not mean that wrong-doing shall go on quite without restraint and check. He does not say that society shall not protect itself, and make it difficult and dangerous for wrongs to be committed ; indeed, he probably is not thinking of society at all. And so, in the same way, if in any case by punishing an act of personal wrong done to himself, a man should so be able to protect himself and society in the future, to this also Jesus' words would not apply. We shall begin to see what Jesus has in mind if we recognize the purpose that belongs to punishment. For there are two very different ways in which one may look at punishment ; there is punishment which has some greater good in view behind it, and there is punishment just for punishment's sake. It may be that by punishing a wrong, a man can bring about his neighbor's good, that he can deter the wrongdoer from going farther in the way which, after all, will bring most harm to himself ; and then, of course, punishment would be the very best proof of love that he could give. But punishment that is not based upon love, retaliation, a mere penalty, so much suffering received for so much given, this is what Jesus forbids ; the spirit of love that seeks one's neighbor's best good, is the principle he lays down in its stead. No doubt the doctrine seems a very hard one ; indeed, there are few things which the ordinary man is less ready to accept. What, we say, are we not to have our rights ? are we to suffer injuries without resenting them ? are we not to get justice for ourselves ? No, says Jesus, however natural your feeling may be, so long as you stand



upon your rights you are not a follower of mine. For in so doing you still are making yourself the centre, whereas I command you to give up your own individual life for the principle of love that shall take in your neighbor as well. It is this very feeling which seems so natural to you against which, first of all, my principle is directed. Not that the feeling of indignation and of protest is wholly wrong. We feel that we are right to be indignant at injustice and oppression ; we burn at wrongs done to the helpless. But however well this may be in the abstract, we know that as a matter of fact, and particularly where it is ourselves that are wronged, there usually is something quite different that comes in. It is not pure indignation at injustice which prompts a man to pay his enemy back, it is *his* wrong, it is anger that *he* should be defrauded and *his* rights disregarded, it is resentment that is personal and vindictive ; and this resentment Jesus' principle forbids just as truly as it forbids an outward act of retaliation, because resentment just as truly as retaliation is contrary to love. Many a man has said to himself, I will not pay my enemy back, as he deserves, though I should very much like to do it, if it were not forbidden ; but I wash my hands of him from this time forth, and he need expect no more favors from me. But how much better is he, measured by Jesus' principle, than his neighbor who pays his debts by knocking his enemy down ? What that principle forbids is not only the expression of resentment, but resentment itself, even more truly ; what it enjoins is the spirit of love which lays up no grudge for injuries, which always is ready with help and with forgiveness.

And so we have the culminating stage of Jesus' doc-

trine of human character. It is not so very difficult to be honest in business, to treat our neighbors fairly and justly, to abstain from cheating them when we have the chance, to live purely and honorably. It is easy to love those who love us, to bear kindly feelings and give generous help to those who are courteous and honorable in their dealings, pleasant neighbors and good friends. But to love our enemies, to bless them that curse us, to look on and see what we take to be our rights trampled upon, and resist the desire to make the offender smart for his deeds, to do this without a particle of resentment and ill-feeling, and to be ready, however often we may be ill-treated and our good offices spurned, to offer our help again when the help is needed, how very hard it seems to us ; how often we are tempted to say such virtue is out of human reach. And yet this is the ideal which Jesus sets ; and he sets it, not as an ideal which is beautiful and admirable, but which a man, if he finds it a little too hard, may set aside and be content with something just a little easier, but as the necessary goal of every man's attainment. For Jesus nothing less than perfection will suffice. "Ye therefore shall be perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."





## CHAPTER VI.

### THE FUTURE OF THE KINGDOM.

IT is one of the difficult things about Jesus' teaching, perhaps on the whole the most difficult question of all, precisely what it was that Jesus believed about the future of the kingdom which he had come to found. It is not the case here, as it is in other aspects of his teaching, that on one side is a belief which we can determine with practical certainty that Jesus held, and on the other side a few passages which conflict with this; at any rate the conflicting passages are much more evenly divided, and there is considerably more reason to hesitate before settling upon which set of them is to be preferred. It is not strange that this should be so, for it is about the future that the religious fancy most inveterately plays, and for the early generations of the Christians in particular the apocalyptic elements, brought over from Judaism into Christianity, possessed a peculiarly intense interest, which could not fail to influence materially the tradition of Jesus' words. It will be well therefore to begin somewhat cautiously with those passages which are best assured.

According to our Gospels, which here seem to be following Mark, Jesus began immediately after Peter's confession at Cæsarea Philippi to warn his disciples of

his approaching death ; and in connection with this there is an incident in which he rebukes Peter, because Peter will not recognize such a possibility. This narrative, it is true, can scarcely be depended on. Mark's authority is never of the best, and the fact that here, as usual, he constructs his picture out of material which he gets piecemeal from his source, and puts in Jesus' mouth words which tradition already had told of more appropriately in the answer to the devil in the wilderness, is still further against him. Nevertheless all that it is important for us to establish, the fact that Jesus looked forward to his own death, is contained in the words by which, just before, Jesus commends Peter. 'The Church which Jesus himself had not been able to found shall still be founded, now that the disciples have recognized the central thought of his teaching ; theirs is the task of realizing it as an actual community, of determining what its external form and polity shall be. Here certainly Jesus looks to the extension of his kingdom ; and because to the disciples and not to himself is left the authority, it is an extension which is to take place after he is dead. And there is no difficulty in this. If Jesus' idea of the Messiahship was wholly spiritual, and not material at all, there was nothing to make his own death impossible for him to think of, while an insight much less keen than his own must have shown him that from the Pharisees he stood in serious danger. No doubt the Evangelists have made his predictions much more definite than they really were, and indeed we have no direct prediction of death which is worth a great deal. The only case for which much can be said, barring a few recorded just before his betrayal which will be examined in another place, is the parable of the bridegroom,

and probably from the parable of the bridegroom we are not safe in drawing any but the most general conclusion. The parable is not meant definitely as an allegory of Jesus and his disciples; what Jesus means to say is that expression of sorrow will come with the time of sorrow, and he illustrates this by an example taken from every-day life, although it may be indeed that he is casting a side-glance at himself. There is, however, sufficient evidence that Jesus prepared his disciples for a ministry in which his own previous death was clearly implied. Even here, it is true, we cannot rely upon every passage. The passage in Matthew, for instance, upon Church discipline, is shown both on critical grounds and by internal evidence to be of later origin; and the last Beatitude, which speaks of persecutions which the disciples are to endure—evidently with the supposition that Jesus no longer is with them,—in all probability is an interpolation. Jesus has been speaking of the blessings which are to come into the lives of the needy through the knowledge of the kingdom, of the void which the kingdom is to fill; and now it is an entirely forced transition to pass over at once to the rewards for certain unpleasant things which only are to come sometime in the future. The only bond between the two is that they both refer to physical sufferings. But without leaning upon these passages, the words to Peter are enough to prove the point, and to this may be added in particular the discourse upon confidence in God.<sup>1</sup> Here Jesus assumes that the teaching which he has given to them in secret is after his death to be proclaimed openly, and that their work will not be free from dangers which will tempt them to deny him; in

<sup>1</sup> Luke 12: 1 ff.



its main features the discourse bears plainly the marks of Jesus' style.

And in these passages, we have to notice, with an exception which will be spoken of afterwards, Jesus talks as we should expect him to talk ; he does not speak of a kingdom which shall be brought about by a visible descent from heaven and a visible judgment, but of a kingdom of truth, which is established by spreading the truth which it has been his work to teach. And what he implies here it is the express purpose of several of his parables to state. There is the parable of the talents : in this parable the emphasis certainly is not upon any suddenness or unexpectedness in the lord's arrival, but the kingdom is made to centre about the use which is made of the opportunities in this life, and it has nothing to do with conditions that differ from the conditions that hold at present. Agreeing with this is the emphasis which Jesus lays upon the naturalness, the normalness of the kingdom's growth ; it is like a grain of mustard-seed and like the leaven gradually spreading through the lump, it falls and takes root and bears fruit, or else it dies away without fruition, with just as absolute a dependence on the natural laws of growth, as the seed which the sower casts from his hand. There are indeed two parables which seem to go against this, and which make the consummation of the kingdom, not the end of a natural process, but a violent catastrophe ; but of one of these we fortunately are still able to detect the origin. The parable of the wheat and tares is connected, by its position and by the elements which make it up, with the parable of the growing seed which we find in Mark, and this suggests at once that they only are two varying forms of one and the



same thing. And if we put the question in this way, Of two forms of a parable, one of which is simple and natural, and the other elaborate and allegorical, one of which agrees perfectly with Jesus' teaching, and the other disagrees with it, which is most likely to be the original form? the question answers itself. The parable of the growing seed teaches what the parable of the sower teaches, the perfect naturalness of the kingdom's growth: the parable of the tares is professedly an allegory; it teaches so many things that it teaches nothing clearly; it does not represent something taken from common life, but a perfectly strange and isolated case. And it is not true to life, as Jesus' parables are, for the servants never would have asked so absurd a question as to how tares came to be among the wheat, unless they had been quite new to farming, and the master could not have known an enemy had sown them, because, under any circumstances, tares were likely to spring up. Indeed the parable, together with the similar parable of the net and fishes, betrays its late origin by the way in which it presupposes an organized Church, in which the good and the evil are mixed up together. Jesus never thought of the kingdom in this way, not because he could not see that evil would get into the Church, but because in just so far it would have ceased for him to be the kingdom, because it was the kingdom only as it embodied righteousness.

And what from Jesus' parables we find that he believed, we easily can see that he must have believed, if we are not to attribute to him a lack of insight which the rest of his teaching would not prepare us for. If he saw that for the present the kingdom was a kingdom of righteousness in which all external influence

over men was out of place, then he must have seen that this forever would be so, and that it was just as impossible to set up the kingdom by coming in a cloud from heaven and by separating the wicked from the good, as it was to establish an earthly empire and to make men righteous by freeing them from their oppressors. Both alike had nothing to do with the formation of character, and because the kingdom had to do with character, everything external, every interference with the course of history, whether it was present or future, natural or supernatural, was foreign to it. Nevertheless, while we may regard this as the natural deduction from Jesus' conception, the apocalyptic element has worked itself so intricately into the fabric of Jesus' speeches, as recorded in the Gospels, that a somewhat minute inquiry will be needed to clear up more effectually Jesus' connection with the doctrine which appears all through the New Testament under the name of the Coming of the Son of man.

In entering upon this discussion, the passage which is the crucial one, because it is least open to suspicion, is the discourse about watchfulness, which is found in both Matthew and Luke ; in Luke from the thirty-fifth verse of the twelfth chapter, to the forty-seventh verse. The first four verses of this section, we are inclined to think, are a mere abstract, taken from Mark and from the parable of the virgins, which, as Matthew seems to show, stood originally in this place. Briefly our reasons for thinking so are these : in Luke the allusion to burning lamps and to a marriage feast has no special motive, as in Matthew's parable ; the whole passage is confused, and hovers between the literal and the parabolic ; and the action of the master is unnatural, and out of all proportion to that which calls it forth. But

the rest of the discourse, in which Matthew and Luke agree and which no doubt is genuine, is what we wish to call attention to. Now this speaks of a Coming of the Son of man, but it cannot at all apply naturally to a single visible appearance once for all. Naturally this discourse, together with the parable of the virgins, which goes along with it, is no more than an exhortation to constant readiness and watchfulness, and a warning that the judgment of God is continually hanging over the unfaithful and the careless. "But if that servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin to beat the menservants and the maidservants, and to eat and drink, and to be drunken; the lord of that servant shall come in a day when he expecteth not, and in an hour when he knoweth not, and shall cut him asunder, and appoint his portion with the unfaithful." The Jews had a final judgment day for the ungodly; Jesus' thought goes deeper, and with him this judgment is something which is occurring daily, wherever there is unfaithfulness and corruption,—“except ye repent ye shall all likewise perish.” “Whenever,” says Jesus, “the evil servant says thus in his heart”; but of a general Parousia he could not have said that it was sure to come whenever a man was neglectful of his duty. Interpreting these words, then, as other words of his have to be interpreted, remembering that with him the outward, the sensuous form, is of small account, and the spirit, the inner meaning, is everything, we cannot well come to any other conclusion. The only great objection to this is that such a judgment is not very happily described as a Coming of the Son of man. This title has too decidedly an apocalyptic coloring to make it very probable that Jesus deliberately should have chosen it, when

he saw, as he must have seen, how likely it was to lead his followers away from the right track. There is no need, however, that this title should be retained against the obvious meaning of the passage. One of the verses in which it occurs is found again in the more general form, "Ye know not the day nor the hour"; and the other verse, "Be ye therefore also ready, for in an hour when ye think not the Son of man cometh," is of the nature of a moral or deduction drawn from Jesus' parable, and we have seen that such express explanations are always to be suspected. But if in this passage, where Jesus speaks so distinctly of judgment and of the necessity of watchfulness, he yet repudiates, to all intents, the doctrine of a supernatural coming, we are justified in approaching the passages in which such a doctrine does clearly show itself with an added caution, ready to reject them, without very much ceremony, in case they fail to produce pretty decided evidence to support their claims.

And of these passages, the parable of the unjust judge, which is found in Luke alone, need hardly come into consideration, because it is in the last degree doubtful whether it represents what Jesus really said. This parable, or at any rate the turn which is given to it by Luke, reveals clearly a later time. Men are beginning to despair of Christ's coming, they are praying for vengeance upon their persecutors, faith seems likely to be driven from the earth. How else are we to account for the combination of a long delay and a speedy vengeance, unless we have the words of a man for whom the delay was in the past, the speedy vengeance in the future? Then too, if Jesus spoke these words, he taught his disciples to pray for vengeance upon their enemies, and this also cannot be admitted.

The body of the parable may indeed be genuine, but if it is genuine it only is meant to show, like the parable of the friend and the loaves, the difference between man's unwillingness and the willingness of God. But what, unless it can be accounted for, is really fatal to the view we have advanced, is the long chapter which is concerned entirely with the second coming of Christ. This is given by all of the Evangelists, but if the three accounts are compared, it will be found that Matthew as usual has added much that does not belong here, and that the discourse originally stood much as it stands in Mark at present ; and so we shall follow Mark's form to avoid confusion.

The meaning of this discourse as it stands in Mark cannot fairly be questioned. Jesus with much detail predicts the fall of Jerusalem and the prodigies which are to attend it, and immediately after the catastrophe he says that he is to appear in the clouds of heaven, to put an end to existing things, and to introduce a new era, an everlasting reign of the saints. If language is to have any meaning it is quite impossible to spiritualize the passage, or to get away from the fact that the event which it predicts is to come about within a moderate period of time, before the end of the existing generation. Before criticising this, however, it will be necessary to look at two other isolated sayings in the Gospels which have the same point of view. One of these comes in a collection of sayings which Mark has made, and which we will give entire.

If any man would come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever would save his life shall lose it ; and whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's shall save it. For what doth it profit a man, to gain the whole world and forfeit his life? For what



should a man give in exchange for his life? For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of man also shall be ashamed of him, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels. Verily I say unto you, There be some here of them that stand by, which shall in no wise taste of death, till they see the kingdom of God come with power. Mark 8: 34—9: 1.

Now this account has no independent value; it is made up after Mark's fashion out of sayings which he has found in his source. The first two verses have their true place in Luke,<sup>1</sup> and the thirty-eighth verse is probably only a crude form of the saying which already has been met with, "Whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven." The last verse therefore cannot be insisted on as if it were undoubtedly genuine, and if we find that this verse also could have been taken from Mark's source, we cannot hesitate to do so. And clearly it only is another way of saying what actually we find in the chapter on the second coming, "This generation shall not pass away, till all these things be fulfilled." The other saying which we have spoken of involves a somewhat more complicated problem, and one which requires some knowledge of the Gospel relations if it is to be made clear; nevertheless we shall try to make it as plain as possible. In both Matthew and Luke there is found a discourse against the fear of men, which up to a certain point agrees in both Gospels,<sup>2</sup> and in both Gospels, in connection with this discourse, there is also another saying, which appears too in the chapter on the second coming, "Be not anxious what ye shall speak, for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye ought

<sup>1</sup> Luke 14: 26, 27; *cf.* Matt. 10: 37-39.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. 10: 26-33; Luke 12: 1-9.



to speak. For it is not ye that speak, but the spirit of your Father which speaketh in you,"—only in Luke this saying follows the discourse, while in Matthew it precedes. This saying therefore, we conclude, was connected with the discourse in the source from which Luke and Matthew both draw ; but who is right, Luke who puts the saying after, or Matthew who places it before? Luke in all likelihood is right and for this reason, that the discourse naturally opens with the saying with which Luke makes it open, "There is nothing covered that shall not be revealed, or hid that shall not be known" ; while Matthew, in putting this saying in the middle of the discourse, gives it an exceedingly poor connection. And this leads to another question. The saying about reliance upon the spirit of God occurs also, as we said before, in the chapter on the second coming, and the whole connection which it has in this chapter Matthew gives in the passage with which we now are concerned.

But beware of men : for they will deliver you up to councils, and in their synagogues they will scourge you ; yea, and before governors and kings shall ye be brought for my sake, for a testimony to them and to the Gentiles. But when they deliver you up, be not anxious how or what ye shall speak. For it shall be given you in that hour what ye shall speak. For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father that speaketh in you. And brother shall deliver up brother to death, and the father his child : and children shall rise up against parents, and cause them to be put to death. And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake : but he that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved. But when they persecute you in this city, flee into the next : for verily I say unto you, Ye shall not have gone through the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come. A disciple is not above his master, nor a servant above his lord. It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household !

All but the last two verses of this passage are found in the discourse about the second coming. Was then the passage original in its present connection, and was it borrowed to form a part of the discourse on the second coming? or, on the other hand, was its original place in the chapter on the second coming, which borrowed only the one verse about reliance upon the Spirit, and did the first Evangelist, meeting with this verse, and remembering its connection in another place, turn to this place and quote the entire passage?

We have little hesitation in saying that the verses about which we are in doubt are very much better suited to their connection in the chapter on the second coming, and agree perfectly with the general style of that chapter. But in the discourse about freedom from fear the atmosphere we must feel is different. The sayings are in Jesus' free and plastic style; there is no minute prediction of definite events: "What ye hear in the ear, proclaim upon the housetop"; "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and not one of them shall fall to the ground without your Father." Compare these with the other sayings, "They will deliver you up to their councils, and they will scourge you in the synagogues, and ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake"; "Children shall rise up against their parents and cause them to be put to death"; "Ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake, but he that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved": is it not easy to see the difference at once? Moreover when we let these sayings fall away we have an excellent connection left. "Whosoever shall confess me before men, him will I also confess before my Father which is in heaven; and whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my

Father which is in heaven. And be not anxious what ye shall say, for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye ought to say,"—it is in connection with confessing Jesus before men that the saying has its meaning. Then the last two verses make a fitting close: "The disciple is not above his master, or the servant above his lord." We know that these verses were in the source, because Luke gives them in another connection, although his connection is an impossible one. In this case however the remaining verse, which is the one we have been aiming at in all this discussion, must also fall away: "When they persecute you in one city, flee into another, for ye shall not have gone through the cities of Israel till the Son of man be come." This does not suit the rest of the discourse, for it is not poetry, but a bald and literal prediction; it probably was suggested in the same way in which the saying in Mark was suggested, and had its special form determined by the discourse on the sending out of the twelve Apostles, which Matthew places just before. This very fact, that the saying, "Ye shall not have gone through the cities of Israel," points so unmistakably to the mission of the disciples from city to city, not to Samaria or heathendom, but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, is enough to show that the saying could not have belonged to a discourse which originally could have had no sort of connection with this mission of the Twelve, because it had to do, not with events in Jesus' lifetime, but with events after his death.

To the chapter on the second coming, therefore, everything goes back; and of this chapter what are we to say? So much at any rate, that of all the speeches which are attributed to Jesus, this has the very least

in its favor. The style is utterly unlike Jesus' style, and only here and there do we find a touch which reminds us in the least of him. The whole is a list of literal predictions, such a list as one living in the midst of the events would be likely to draw up ; there is no trace of spiritual truth, but everything refers to outward events ; much is made up of Old Testament quotations ; and other discourses have occasionally been used. And when it is considered, in addition, that there is no reconciling this with others of Jesus' teachings, it is not too much to say, that, in its present form, the discourse cannot possibly have come from him. There is much probability in the conjecture that we have here a little Apocalypse, which the Evangelist has inserted in his book, and which it is possible that tradition points to when it speaks of a divine revelation which warned the Christians to flee from the doomed city. At any rate, it probably was written when destruction was impending.<sup>1</sup> But still is it not possible that some real reminiscence of Jesus' words lies at the bottom of the discourse ? may not Jesus at least have predicted the fall of Jerusalem, and may he not have said that, while the day and hour were unknown to him, the catastrophe was likely to come before that generation should have passed away ? In itself there is nothing impossible in this ; Jesus reproached his countrymen because they could not read the signs of the times, and he surely may have had the wit to read them better. And if his predictions were made a little more circumstantial, if an event so astounding it was thought, must usher in the coming of the Son of man himself then the chapter is sufficiently accounted for. But what tells strongly even against this is the absence

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Mk. 13 : 14.

of any reference to such a prediction in the rest of the New Testament, although there are places where such a reference would seem unavoidable. The Apocalypse has to do with just this circle of ideas, and here the destruction of the Temple seems to be excluded; at any rate the writer hardly could have avoided giving us a hint of it, if he had been acquainted with such a prediction from the mouth of Jesus. And in the letters to the Thessalonians also, the prediction hardly would have been ignored altogether, and a knowledge of it must have put some check upon the restlessness and uncertainty of the early Church.

With the great discourse on the second coming out of the way, the backbone of the argument for such a belief on Jesus' part is broken. Nevertheless there still remains one passage which deserves consideration. This is the discourse which is found in the seventeenth chapter of Luke, and which Matthew also gives in a very disjointed way, which also has to do with the coming of the Son of man. There are a few foreign elements which seem to have got attached to this passage: the twenty-fifth verse looks like a gloss by the Evangelist; the thirty-third belongs to another discourse, and here does not have its real meaning; and the warning which is given in the thirty-first verse is found also in the great chapter on the second coming, where it has reference to the destruction of Jerusalem, and is appropriate enough, while here it does not fit in well with the concluding verses. The catastrophe could not have been so sudden as these verses represent it, and still have given an opportunity for flight. But the rest of the discourse gives a fairly consistent picture: Jesus warns his disciples not to be led astray by their longing for his coming, for when the time



does really come, there will be no possibility of mistake about it. And the time will not come when men are looking for it, but when they are careless and secure. By a somewhat violent feat of interpretation, it is possible to make even this agree with the results which already have been obtained from Jesus' teaching. "Wheresoever the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together," is the way in which the discourse comes to an end ; and we might take this as containing in a nutshell the whole point of the passage, and as meaning simply this : wherever corruption is, there judgment is hanging over it, sudden, visible to all ; and in this judgment the coming of the Son of man consists. And this essentially is what we have found already that Jesus taught. Nevertheless, however tempting this may be, it will have to be set aside. The coming of the Son of man, as has been said, is not a natural name for such a judgment, and the comparison with lightning refers unmistakably to an appearance such as the early Church conceived of it. There is nothing for it, then, but to give up this discourse as well, for, left alone as it is, it cannot stand out against the presumption which has been raised against the doctrine which it sets forth. And apart from the fact that it does not show very distinctly the marks of Jesus' style, there is one point in particular to be made against it. It is connected by Luke with the incident in which the Pharisees ask Jesus about the time of the kingdom's appearance, and this incident is so very characteristic, it shows Jesus' point of view so clearly in distinction from the later point of view, that it cannot easily be rejected. But the narrative which conceives of the kingdom as a future and supernatural thing, becomes decidedly more improbable when we



find that it has got placed alongside a narrative in which the kingdom stands out plainly as a present and natural thing ; the connection at any rate cannot be retained. Moreover it appears that the discourse on the coming of the Son of man has borrowed from the other, and this is sufficient to condemn it. "Ye shall not say, Lo here, or, Lo there," says Jesus to the Pharisees ; and he means that the kingdom has no external marks or boundaries to know it by. But, in the other saying, "Then if they shall say unto you, Lo here, or, Lo there," all the poetry has gone out of the phrase, and instead of being a picturesque way of putting an abstract statement, it is simply the prophecy of a literal fact. And this repetition of a phrase in a different atmosphere, so that the meaning of it is changed, of itself goes far to throw doubt upon the passage where the repetition occurs.

All this therefore leads to the conclusion that Jesus did not look for any supernatural appearance which was to change violently the course of the world, but that he regarded the growth of his kingdom as a silent and natural growth by which human society should gradually be transformed. Doubtless he also had a doctrine of last things, but precisely what form this doctrine took in his mind it perhaps is not possible to determine with the little evidence we have. In two or three passages Jesus makes use of the conception of a final judgment-day, but it is not likely we can attribute to him safely anything beyond the kernel of this doctrine, any more than in the case of the doctrine of Gehenna, which Jesus also makes use of in figurative passages. The only exception to this is in the great judgment scene which is found in Matthew ; but while this naturally seems to show a belief in a literal judg-

ment-day, it hardly is to be attributed to Jesus, in spite of the undeniable beauty of its teaching. Two doctrines appear in the passage, which were held to strongly in later times, but which it is improbable that Jesus taught : the coming of the Son of man, and the eternal punishment of the wicked in its most literal sense. Likewise the kingdom is spoken of in a manner very unusual with Jesus, as something belonging to the future ; and the position of supremacy which Jesus is made to assume in relation to his followers, and the recognition of this supremacy among all nations, is as little like Jesus' ordinary tone as it is perfectly in accord with later theologies, in which Jesus' Messiahship had taken the place of first importance, and when the Gospel had spread over the world. The imagery moreover does not show the taste of Jesus, for the abrupt interjection of the metaphor of the sheep and goats, while the rest of the passage is literal, is a fault which Jesus never would have been guilty of. The objective way in which Jesus is spoken of throughout makes it probable that whoever first was the author of the passage did not intend it should be put in Jesus' mouth. That Jesus did believe in a future world is put beyond doubt by the argument in favor of it which he addresses to the Sadducees. The argument is probably not the merely verbal argument which at first sight it might seem to be, for Jesus is very little given to playing upon words. Most likely at the bottom of his argument there lies the thought that God could not thus belittle himself in solemnly declaring that he was the God of men whose ephemeral existence had long since been cut short ; in other words, the fact that men stood in relationship to God pointed them out as immortal beings. But at any rate Jesus'

answer throws a gleam of light upon the doctrine which he held, and shows that it was no sensuous and bodily form of life that he looked forward to, but that it involved a great change from human conditions. More than this it is hardly safe to say. And likewise as regards his belief about the punishment of the wicked, it is certain that Jesus insists upon the punishment which wrongdoing must ever bring in its train ; but what the nature of that punishment shall be, or what shall be its time relations, he does not seek to settle. All such speculations lie without the range of the eternal principles on which Jesus founded his beliefs.





## CHAPTER VII.

### THE GALILEAN MINISTRY.

THERE is a great temptation, in trying to reconstruct the details of Jesus' life, to act with somewhat more tenderness towards the Gospel narratives than can be wholly justified, and to grasp at whatever in particular instances may be used to save the credit of the story, without enough bearing in mind the treacherousness in general of the tradition which we have to do with. So long as the Gospels are regarded as upon the whole a credible record of history, a certain caution in admitting of mistakes is of course quite proper, though this caution often has been carried to extremes. If however it is admitted that the reports which have reached us are so thoroughly honey-combed with legend, we no longer have the right to pretend that there is a very large or a very secure residue left behind. A very natural hesitancy about wholly giving up possessions we have cherished has caused men steadily to approach the Gospels with the thought of saving everything they were not absolutely forced to let go their hold of. Accordingly, if there was a narrative which in itself was not impossible, they have preferred not to scrutinize too carefully the company in which it is presented to them.

But this is not the method of history. The question of history is not, How much of our material can be retained without positive contradiction? but, What probably is true? If the most of what a particular Evangelist tells us is surely legendary, and then we come upon something which has no great unlikelihood, it is not enough to say that it may be true, but we must have something to show pretty clearly that it cannot easily be otherwise. We must therefore resign ourselves to the conclusion, however unpalatable it may be, that the purely historical matter which the Gospels can furnish will at the best be meagre, and that for facts which can be depended on with perfect security, it will be necessary to limit ourselves pretty much to the actual sayings of Jesus, or to such narratives as are closely bound up with a saying.

Probably soon after the imprisonment of John the Baptist Jesus entered upon the work to which he had given up his life. It was with no blare of trumpets that he went about his ministry. Moving quietly from place to place, mixing in the homely life of the Galilean peasants, talking of righteousness and the kingdom wherever he could find an audience—who was to guess that a new and tremendous force had come into the world? The Gospels are inclined to represent Jesus as if he had been constantly on the move, hurrying about through all Galilee from city to city. This, which is intelligible if Jesus had no deeper message than his own Messiahship, hardly works in so well with a message which required, as the message of the kingdom did, that it should be so drilled and hammered into men before it stood any show of true acceptance; and it is more likely, as is indicated by one of Jesus' sayings, that the bulk of his ministry was con-

fined to a comparatively small region about the northern shore of the Sea of Galilee, and centring in the cities of Capernaum, Chorazin, and Bethsaida. Tradition has it, and probably has it rightly, that Capernaum was made in a manner the seat of his labors, although the statement which Matthew makes, depending partly upon prophecy, and which is implied in Mark as well,<sup>1</sup> that Jesus had a house there, does not agree with Jesus' statement that the "Son of man hath not a place to lay his head."

It was not long before the fame of Jesus began to spread. Possessed as he was of a natural and winning eloquence, the curiosity of the volatile Galileans would quickly bring crowds together to him, and, once there, they would be held there by stronger bonds. His authority, his straightforwardness, his freedom from all the subtilities and trivialness of the Pharisaic teaching, appealed to them as earnestness and simplicity, backed by the power of righteousness and the call to duty, must always appeal. Jesus seems moreover to have had a peculiar influence over the affections of men. The more degraded parts of the community in particular, to whose despair Jesus' words of tenderness and forgiveness brought an unlooked-for gleam of hope, seem to have repaid him with a passionate love. Even the higher classes of the nation could not remain unaffected by the charm of one whose wit was so keen and whose insight so acute, and we read of one scribe at least who wished to be reckoned as a follower of his.

Nevertheless Jesus' popularity did not deceive him for a moment into thinking that his task was to prove an easy one. He saw that to interest the people and arouse their enthusiasm was a very different thing from

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<sup>1</sup> See Mk. 3 : 20, and *cf.* 6 : 4.



effecting the permanent revolution in their character and conceptions which he had set about doing. It was with this in his mind that he began to look about him for a closer band of disciples, whom he might keep more constantly under his own personal influence, and so might get the chance to mould to his own purposes. The story of the disciples belongs to the history of the Church, and the most general account of them will be sufficient here. That they were twelve in number may be taken as settled by Paul's testimony, and their names, which are given first by Mark, are so naturally the property of tradition, that we may take the list as at least approximately correct. Luke changes the name of Thaddæus to Judas, though why he does so is uncertain, and the first Evangelist identifies Matthew with Levi the publican. Possibly this identification came about through a correct tradition that Matthew had been a publican; at any rate, the identification itself is scarcely to be defended. For to Mark is due both the story of Levi and the notice of the calling of the Twelve, so that it is evident Mark meant to point them out as different men. Moreover one cannot help the suspicion that the Levi of Mark never had any real existence. To begin with, Mark's methods are so doubtful that the very fact a story comes from him is no slight evidence against it. Now it happens that in Luke there is a series of sayings for which the saying about the whole and the sick, which is connected with Levi's call, would furnish an excellent introduction<sup>1</sup>; and that the saying originally did stand there is indicated by the reminiscences of it which Luke has in a verse of this passage which he is himself responsible for: "There is joy over one *sinner* that *repenteth*, more

<sup>1</sup> See Luke 15: 1ff.

than over ninety and nine *righteous* persons who *need* no repentance." The passage begins with a statement that the Pharisees were murmuring because Jesus ate with sinners; and it is just in Mark's fashion to take this up, and make it more vivid by giving a special instance of it, and by adding names and details. And this is made more probable by the resemblance which the abrupt and startling call of Levi has to the equally abrupt call of the other four disciples which Mark relates. In both cases it is the evident intention of the narrative to give dramatic force by representing the call as entirely without preparation, and the obedience as coming from the instantaneously exerted power of Jesus. This is without probability in itself, and the fact that it comes from Mark is sufficient to condemn it.

To the training of these few disciples Jesus turned himself more and more, as he saw that, so far as the great mass of the people was concerned, he was failing of his purpose. The reasons for this failure appear in Jesus' own utterances. In the first place the people were too deeply immersed in their material ideals. "From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the men of violence take it by force." John had aroused the popular enthusiasm, but it had taken a wrong course, and the people were bent upon a kingdom of violence, of political changes. Even more however it was to the spiritual leaders of the nation that Jesus owed his lack of success: "Ye have shut the kingdom of heaven against men," says Jesus; "ye enter not in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering in to enter;" this is the motive of his terrible indictment of them. We cannot perhaps hope after these years to trace with very great detail the progress of the

quarrel between Jesus and the Pharisees, but yet a good deal of material which bears upon that quarrel is still present in the Gospels, and the main lines of it are fairly distinct. It is not to be wondered at that many of the Pharisees, whose very life was in the reward of praise and veneration which their piety brought them, viewed with no very friendly eyes the rise of a new teacher, without the technical training of the Scribe, who bid fair to outstrip them all in popularity. There would be no very weighty pretext needed therefore to bring their religious prejudices into line with their personal feelings, and enable them to gloss over their selfishness by an appeal to the glory of God. They did not have to go far in order to find an occasion. Jesus from the very start had acted flatly in opposition to the notions which in the typical Pharisee's mind made up the sum and substance of religion. Presently the Pharisees began to find fault. Jesus was not keeping the traditions of the elders, they complained; he was associating himself with men who must of necessity defile him: and what, reasoned the pious Pharisee, was any hypothetical good to the sinner in comparison with the honor of God's law. Again, he did not trouble himself or his disciples to go through with all the requisite washings and purifications which the wisdom of the Elders had devised. Jesus' disciples ate and drank when they should be fasting. Nay, more, he was even encroaching upon the sanctity of the Sabbath itself, and making it a cheap and common thing. It is unnecessary to ask in just what proportion sincerity and selfish passions were mingled in the Pharisees' complaints. No doubt they were sincere in their own fashion; they really did regard Jesus as a dangerous leveller and heretic, who was working to

destroy the religion once for all delivered to the saints. But this does not lessen the blame attaching to them, and their chiefest condemnation, as Jesus pointed out, was that with eyes wide open they could look upon the handiwork of God's own Spirit and give it to the devil, that they could do the devil's work and still believe they were offering God service. The calm and convincing answers which Jesus gave to their complaints they made no effort to understand, but only were irritated the more. From resenting actual violations of tradition on Jesus' part they began to hunt up occasions against him. They plied him with questions designed to arouse an *odium theologicum*, or even to bring him into disrepute with the authorities. And the fact that they always were worsted in their arguments did not tend to make their resentment any the less keen.

Meanwhile Jesus apparently had gone about his work quietly and persistently, and had been content for the most part with assuming the defensive against his enemies. But presently there came a new move on the part of his opponents. Perceiving that Jesus could not be conquered by argument, they began to strike at him in a more vulnerable place, and to seek to undermine his influence with the people. The worst construction was put upon his actions, and his name was bandied about as a glutton and a drunkard. Slanders began to be circulated about him, such as that he was an emissary of Beelzebub. It was demanded that he should attest his authority by miraculous means, in order that his failure to do so might discredit him with the wonder-loving populace. It was inevitable that the influence of those who sat in Moses' seat, and to whom the people had grown accustomed to look up to as their natural religious teachers, when cast well-nigh unani-

mously in one direction, should in the long run bear its fruit. It was in vain that Jesus gave his warnings; a sevenfold demon of perversity seemed to have entered the nation and its leaders. We become conscious of an altered tone in Jesus' words; he warns them of the judgment which is close upon the nation unless they repent, a judgment pointed to by no supernatural signs, but by such as their own eyes might behold if they would but look, just as they see the signs of drought and rain. If they will not look, if the very eye that is given them for light be turned to darkness, how great must they expect that darkness to be! If the tree yields no fruit, and even after an excess of pains upon it shows that its usefulness is over, what advantage is there in its cumbering the ground? Indeed it must have been plain to any one not blinded by national partiality that heroic measures were necessary to save a nation thus compounded of dead formalism and blind fanaticism. Whether Jesus ever openly proclaimed that other nations were to come into the inheritance which Israel had refused, is a little more uncertain, but there can be no question that he himself realized the universality of his message, and the parable of the rich man's supper, and the discourse about the narrow gate, although they are not certainly genuine, are most likely so, and they make the announcement of the fact explicit.

To Jesus we cannot doubt that these were days of bitter trial. In spite of their utter baselessness, the taunts of his enemies hurt him. In one of his later discourses we find, by an allusion to it, that the old charge about Beelzebub had not even then lost its sting. More and more he turned himself to the quiet instruction of his disciples, content to wait for the



future, when what he told in the ear should by them be proclaimed upon the house-tops, with better chances of success than at the present. But even his disciples, though they had made a start in the right direction, fell sadly short of what Jesus had a right to expect from them. Towards the very close of his ministry we find two of them, fired by just the spirit of ambition and self-seeking which Jesus was trying so patiently to wean them from, asking for the places of honor in the kingdom, the same limited and gross old kingdom of an earthly ideal ; and something of a sigh still breathes through Jesus' words as he answers them, "Ye know not what ye are asking." And then all of the disciples begin to fight among themselves with jealous rivalry, and Jesus patiently goes back and gives their lesson to them over again once more. In his own family, too, it is probable that Jesus suffered. The narratives which Mark gives of this are indeed doubtful, but it may be considered likely that Mark had the fact to go upon, and besides, this may very well be the sense of the somewhat enigmatical passage which Luke gives in the twelfth chapter. "I came to cast fire upon the earth ; and what will I, if it is already kindled ? But I have a baptism to be baptized with ; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished ! Think ye that I am come to give peace on the earth ? I tell you, Nay ; but rather division : for there shall be from henceforth five in one house divided, three against two, and two against three. They shall be divided, father against son, and son against father ; mother against daughter, and daughter against mother ; mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law, and daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law." This passage probably was in the source, for Matthew's phrase, "cast peace," is less



natural than "cast fire," and shows a reminiscence of it; and the other phrase, "a baptism to be baptized with," is repeated by Mark in the account of the request of James and John,<sup>1</sup> where the use, contrary to Matthew, of two phrases to express a single idea, is awkward. Now if Jesus had just been suffering from hostility in his own family, this would explain his choice of family discord as an example of the effect the Gospel was to have, and it would give a more personal meaning to the opening clause. I am come to sow discord, says Jesus, and what right have I to complain if I am the first to suffer from it? It only is a part of the baptism of suffering which I know my work must bring to me.

The Passover drew on, and Jesus determined to go up to Jerusalem. Whether he had visited the city before since his ministry opened, it seems impossible to say. The only passage which bears very closely on the question is the lament over Jerusalem, and this, in spite of its poetical beauty, it does not seem easy to attribute to Jesus. The woes against the Pharisees close with a highly dramatic outburst against the Jewish people. "Therefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: some of them shall ye kill and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues and persecute from city to city: that upon you may come all the righteous blood shed on the earth, from the blood of Abel the righteous to the blood of Zachariah, whom ye slew between the sanctuary and the altar. Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation." Now the way in which this passage mentions scribes goes to show that it comes from an adherent of the Pharisees,

<sup>1</sup> Mk. 10: 38.

and that at least it does not belong to a discourse which was devoted to a condemnation of the scribes. Then too in no natural sense could Jesus speak of himself as sending to them prophets. But in Luke the passage opens with the words, "On this account the Wisdom of God saith," and this expression seems to have been taken from the source. For not only otherwise is Luke's insertion of it not easy to explain, but Matthew also starts in with "on this account," and what has gone before does not give the reason for the sending, but, as in Luke, the reason why the words are quoted. All the difficulty therefore is got rid of, if we suppose that we have here a quotation from some lost book in which Wisdom is represented as the speaker. Now the lament over Jerusalem probably is a part of the same passage, for Matthew places them together, and the style is all of a piece; the one then who would have gathered the children of Jerusalem together, is the one who had sent prophets and wise men and scribes. And this enables us to let "often" have its proper meaning, and not limit it to the very few visits which at best Jesus could have made to the capital. And finally this explains the sentence where it is said that the speaker shall not again be seen until they are ready to greet him with the cry, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." These words only are appropriate in the mouth of one who is just on the point of turning his back upon the city of his own accord, as Wisdom might well be conceived as doing, and who refuses to return until the inhabitants shall have changed their minds. But if Jesus spoke them, and then went on to teach in the Temple, they lose their point, and they cannot easily be made to refer to a violent taking away by death.

The Gospels clearly have the idea that Jesus went up to Jerusalem with a full knowledge of what was to befall him there. There is no likelihood in this, however, which makes his death but little less than self-destruction. Nevertheless it is probable that already his opponents had begun to cherish the thought of getting rid of him by violent means. Their hatred had been still more inflamed by the incisive way in which Jesus had from time to time shown up their own hypocrisy and worthlessness. The last and greatest denunciation of them may have been brought about in the capital itself, but already it is likely, as in the instance when they disputed with him about the washing of hands, that he had let his scorn of their miserable casuistry, which could pervert the Law of God to the most selfish ends, lead him into a more searching criticism of their conduct than they cared to listen to. He had found them wanting, too, in more general parables, such as the parable of the two sons, and had placed them, at least by implication, even below the despised publicans. It was in Jerusalem however that the crisis came about at last. According to the Gospels the final attack of the Pharisees was brought on by an act on the part of Jesus which really was a direct declaration of hostility, the cleansing of the Temple; and possibly the Gospels may be right in this. It is true that this act is not at all in the character of Jesus, but shows rather the spirit of the older prophets; and to us it seems not only useless, but it seems needlessly to have provoked the hostility of his enemies. It is possible though that Jesus' indignation may have led him to do what ordinarily he would have avoided doing. What makes the account much more doubtful is its apparent physical impossibility. It is not easy to

see how Jesus could have done what the Gospels represent him as doing, even by making use of a violence which we must decidedly refuse to admit. On the other hand, without some foundation it is rather difficult to see how the story got about, and there apparently is connected with it a question of the chief priests which by all means appears genuine, the question as to what authority Jesus had for acting as he did. This question naturally implies that Jesus had done something out of the way, something which had aroused a suspicion in the minds of the rulers. Once before no doubt the same question practically had been put to him, when it was demanded that he should give a sign; but there is an important difference between the two incidents—the question which there had been asked by the Pharisees as a trap for Jesus, now, if we may trust the account, comes from the Sadducean, the aristocratic party as well. Now it is clear that both the Pharisees and the Sadducees had a hand in Jesus' death, and the Sadducees appear to have been no less eager for it than their rivals. But their hostility could not have had the same grounds; Jesus' attitude towards tradition, which gave so much offence to the Pharisees, might to them have been even a matter of satisfaction. If actually they did join the Pharisees, this seems only to be explained if the Pharisees had been able to convince them that Jesus had political designs, and for this some act of Jesus which would give color to the charge is not improbable. Therefore, while we do not think that the event could have been just as the Gospels describe it, some basis for the account there probably was, although we do not now feel able to determine just wherein this consisted.

And now Jesus' enemies found an ally in one of

Jesus' own disciples. What gave rise to this resolution in Judas' mind we only can conjecture, for we have very little more than the fact of the betrayal to go upon. We can guess however motives which may have led him on. Judas, no more than the other disciples, came to Jesus in the first place with the idea that he should find in him the Messiah ; and when the other disciples, following in the lead of Peter, began to have a dawning sense of the truth about their Master, the new revelation only left him in bewildered uncertainty. For the life of him he could not dispossess himself of the old ideals, and that Jesus should lay claim to the Messianic dignity, and then go straight against all that he looked and hoped for from the Messiah, might arouse in him a feeling of protest and even of resentment. It would be harsh to blame him too unsparingly for this, in view of the fact that the other disciples as well had got but little farther on, and to the very end of their lives only had succeeded in comprehending Jesus' meaning dimly. And then when Judas found the whole array of the piety and learning of the nation standing over against the new teacher, it might well give added strength to the doubts and suspicions which already had sprung up in his own mind. Still this does not give an adequate motive for his treachery, and this perhaps we are to look for in fears for his own personal safety. What influences had been brought to bear upon him we do not know, but it is unlikely that Judas proceeded absolutely of his own initiation. This, it is true, is the idea which the Gospels give, but the Gospels had no means of knowing the inside history of the case, and naturally would take the alternative which was least complimentary to the traitor. The Pharisees must have kept a sharp

eye on the little circle about Jesus, and have taken note of any symptoms of discontent which might be made to serve their purposes. Perhaps it was some intimation of the plans that had been set on foot that frightened him to action that he might keep his own skin whole, perhaps it was the hope of some substantial reward along with this which finally decided him upon his course ; at any rate the resolution was made, and it only was left to find a convenient opportunity.







## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE LAST DAYS OF JESUS.

THE exact facts of the next few days, or weeks, as the case may be, are exceedingly difficult to determine, for the different sources which make up the substance of our Gospels are here not always easy to disentangle, and even when the separation is made and the earliest account is got at, it is hard to say where legend begins and history leaves off. So far as Matthew and Luke are concerned, our criticism of the Gospels leaves us little option in giving up whatever can be shown to come from them. In Matthew, the legendary character of the additions is particularly pronounced, as it has many times been shown, and in Luke, although the case is not as self-evident, the same judgment must be given. The dispute about precedence, which Luke, against all inherent probability, assigns to the last supper, the other Gospels show took place on the occasion of the request of James and John. Again, the saying about buying a sword is disproven by the accompanying reference to the discourse on the sending out of the disciples, which we have shown that Jesus never spoke. The different order which is given to the trial scene, is shown to be a displacement of the older account on which Luke is

drawing, by the fact that the maltreatment of Jesus is made to come before his condemnation, while in Matthew and Mark the condemnation forms its obvious motive. The story of the sending to Herod, apart from its entire absence from the other Gospels, is a manifest interruption of what in the older account is a connected and straightforward story; the elements of which it is composed, the silence of Jesus, the accusations of the priests, the mockery of the soldiers, are just the elements of the other trial; the expectation of seeing a miracle is unwarranted if Jesus worked no miracles; and the pretext which Pilate gives, that Jesus belonged to Herod's jurisdiction, makes it inexplicable that Herod should at once have sent him back again. Then the story of the crucifixion is a confused, and at times blundering reproduction of Mark's account, and the additions which Luke does give in the sayings which Jesus is recorded to have uttered, it is impossible to defend, for they either have their basis in the Old Testament, or else in themselves they are extremely suspicious. The most elaborate addition is the incident of the dying thief; and not only is this a late story, from an untrustworthy source, which contradicts, too, the earlier statement that both the robbers reviled Jesus, but the recognition of Jesus' Messiahship just when he was the very farthest from its realization in the popular sense, is out of the question, and, in any case, there is no likelihood that any of Jesus' disciples were allowed near enough to him to hear a conversation of such a sort. And finally, the circumstantial stories about the appearances of the risen Jesus, are, as will be seen in the next chapter, an absolute impossibility.

And now, after we have disregarded Matthew and

Luke, there still remains the task of tracing Mark's hand in what is left behind, and then again the task of testing rigorously the residue. We cannot hope then with any confidence to have more than a somewhat meagre array of facts left to us after all is done. The chronology of Jesus' stay in Jerusalem, which apparently is due to Mark, and which makes the time a week, is hardly worthy of much credence. Whether we ought to allow a longer or a shorter time there is not much use in asking, although the statement that Jesus preached by day in the Temple and went out in the evening to lodge in the Mount of Olives, and the statement that Judas sought *from that time* an opportunity to betray him, both imply that the older narrative thought of the period as at least of some little duration. At length, however, the Passover came, and for the last time Jesus sat down to eat with his disciples.

Did Jesus know that the end was so near at hand? It certainly is not impossible that he should have had some intimation of it, but whether he did or no must be determined by examining the sayings in the Gospels which point to such a knowledge. There are a set of these, beginning with the story of the anointing at Bethany. This story is a beautiful one, and taking it alone there is nothing very damaging to be said against it; but for critical reasons it seems necessary to attribute the story to Mark. It comes in between two sections which naturally belong together, the two statements that the Pharisees sought means to put Jesus to death, and that they found an opportunity of doing this through Judas. This connection the story interrupts, and in addition it betrays its origin by the vividness of its style, and by the use of the term

*εὐαγγέλιον* in a way which seems in the Gospels to be peculiar to Mark. If therefore we can trace the narrative back to Mark, it would be rash in view of Mark's bad reputation to allow it very much importance ; and we may therefore turn to the other passages, all of which centre about the supper itself. The first of these, the pointing out of the traitor, has the least in its favor. It is not even certain whether it was present in the source, for it does not fit with perfect appropriateness into the story of the supper, and Luke, by deposing it from its position at the beginning, would rather indicate that the source proceeded directly to an account of the Paschal meal. And in any case the natural desire which tradition would feel to give to Jesus a foreknowledge of the traitor must constantly be kept in view. Again it must be remembered that the question is not, Is there anything which absolutely prevents our accepting the history as genuine? When a narrative comes to us in company with so very much that shows the work of legend, the fact that it too can easily have sprung up in the same way is much the same as saying that for the purposes of history that is the explanation we are bound to give it. Now, here, as has been said, the motive for the incident is obvious, and an actual foreknowledge on Jesus' part of plans which Judas must have tried very hard to keep a secret, is not to be admitted without special reason. And when we add to this that the language to Judas is based upon the Old Testament, and that Jesus, in a way common to the Church, but showing a mechanical view of prophecy which does not appear in the authenticated sayings of Jesus himself, makes his death come about through a necessity that prophecy should be fulfilled, and apparently bases his knowledge, not on

information, but upon this fact of prophecy, we are obliged to reject the account. Similarly we must decide in the case of the prophecy of Peter's denial. That Peter did deny his Lord we may indeed suppose to be an actual fact ; but with this given it would be a very simple thing for tradition to dress it up and give to it dramatic completeness, and in pursuit of this to put a forewarning into Jesus' mouth. It happens that we have two versions of this warning, which indicates the amount of dependence we can place upon them severally ; and in the earlier version we have the same use of prophecy and the same conception of it which was found in the narrative just before. When therefore we find that the words of Jesus are peculiarly definite and show an improbable knowledge that the blow was to fall that very night, we must allow that the whole is very doubtful.

The last case to be cited has decidedly a better attestation than any of the others, and it leads to the somewhat larger question as to the facts about the supper as a whole. Here we may take leave of the Gospels for a moment, as we have an earlier and more reliable account in the letter to the Corinthians. Paul's account runs as follows : " For I received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, how that the Lord Jesus in the night in which he was betrayed took bread ; and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, This is my body, which is for you : this do in remembrance of me. In like manner also the cup, after supper, saying, This cup is the new covenant in my blood : this do, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me." It will be noticed that the Gospel version adds to this nothing essential except the words, " I will no more drink of the fruit of the vine, until



that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God." Since this is absent from Paul's account, and since, in addition, it most naturally indicates a conception of the kingdom as something material, or apocalyptic, at the best, we may dismiss it from consideration. But even when we take the account as it stands in Paul's letter, there is no little difficulty connected with it. It is hardly possible to give any other meaning to Jesus' words than that he looked upon his death as a sacrifice for sin, which introduced a new era in the dealings of God with men. Now, it may be that Jesus, deeply impressed with the thought that this was in all probability his last Paschal meal, and with his natural tendency to figure, was struck by the resemblance of his own approaching death, in very truth a sacrifice for men, to the old sacrificial rite of Jewish worship, and that the wine and broken bread came to him as an effective way to give an object lesson to his followers, which at the same time should furnish a simple bond of union for the new spiritual community. This certainly is not inconceivable, and yet after all one ought not to blind himself to the fact that such a conception as this lies decidedly outside the realm of thought which constituted Jesus' ordinary mental life. There is nothing to correspond to it in what we have discovered of Jesus' teaching, for the saying in Mark, "The Son of man came to give his life a ransom for many," drops away when we retain the subsequent sentence about the twelve thrones, as is done by Luke,<sup>1</sup> and is shown to be a dogmatic paraphrase of Jesus' words. Now there is nothing which has come out more clearly in our survey of Jesus' teaching than the manner in which he clears away all the artificialities

<sup>1</sup> See Luke 22 : 27.



which had grown up about the relations between God and men, and gets right down to the simple and universal principles on which the religious life is built. It is just for this reason that Jesus' words appeal so powerfully to the modern consciousness, because they come to us so largely unrefracted by the medium of Jewish technical terminology and theological conceptions. Paul also got out into the light after a good deal of trouble about it, but it was by an entirely different path. To Paul the old artificial barriers between God and men, the legalities of an external covenant, and the complicated relationship to an external law, still had all their force ; and in order to get himself out of the meshes of a partial and mechanical Judaism, with which his profound religious feeling would not let him rest content, he had to construct an intricate system, in which the old legalism was beaten on its own ground, in which with all a lawyer's subtilty God was relieved from the technical difficulties in which he had got himself involved, and his love and care for men allowed free course. Jesus needed nothing of this, simply because his mind had been able to slip the artificial restraints which caused all the difficulty in the first place, by means of the discovery that God did not stand to men in the relation of magistrate and custodian of a law outside himself, but rather of a Father, that love on God's part, never restricted or pent up by mechanical devices or contracts, and on the part of man repentance and loving obedience which the Father was only too ready to meet more than half-way, left no room for the problems of theology which aim to do away with conditions which never existed. But while these words move in a different realm of thought from that in which Jesus lived, we also ought to notice that

they exactly chime in with the circle of ideas in which Paul was more especially interested. To Paul the sacrificial aspects of Christ's death were a matter of a great deal of importance, and the "new covenant" is essentially a Pauline formula, about which his theology largely centred.

This therefore must be borne in mind while we turn aside to notice a peculiar feature in Paul's account. This is the way in which Paul speaks of his information as something which he had received from the Lord. Now there is the possibility, which we admit, that Paul means nothing more by this than that it is to the Lord that the institution of the supper originally goes back ; and yet if this is what he means he certainly has chosen a very ambiguous way of saying it. If Paul had wished merely to say that he was about to give them Jesus' words, there was an easy way for him to say it ; whereas the form of statement which he does use, the stress that is put upon himself as the recipient and upon the Lord as the source of information, inevitably gives the impression that he is speaking of something made known directly to himself. When in another place he gives a piece of history, the story of the resurrection, he talks about it in the way we should expect him to, while if he wishes to emphasize his entire independence of a human medium, as in the case of the principles of his Gospel, he speaks in the same fashion of receiving his knowledge straight from God and not from man. It must be noticed, too, that Paul does not say he received from the Lord the command to observe the rite, unless he is using language very loosely, but rather it is the fact that Jesus uttered these words which he received. Now of course we cannot admit that Paul actually got the information

in a miraculous way ; a miracle to save the trouble of asking some one for himself is least of all conceivable : and so we are led to ask if there is not some other explanation available, before giving up the natural meaning of the words.

Now if we put together the two facts, that the saying attributed to Jesus is redolent of Pauline theology and extremely difficult to fit in with Jesus' conceptions, and that Paul himself apparently tells us that he got the saying by direct and supernatural means, we are already pointed in the direction we shall have to follow. The last paschal meal of Jesus with his disciples, when his life was so soon to go out in the tragedy of crucifixion, must have been a subject of never-failing attractiveness for religious meditation. Paul had come to his doctrine of the sacrificial nature of Christ's death, and now how tempting it would be to find an intimation of this in what was almost the last word of Jesus ; indeed, if the doctrine was a true one, as Paul had no manner of doubt, how could Jesus possibly have avoided such a reference. There was to go upon the fact that Jesus had taken bread and offered it to his disciples, and likewise the wine after supper : what were the bread and wine but emblems of the broken body and the blood of the new covenant ? And with the conviction that such was the fact once firmly rooted, the step is not a very long one to the belief that Jesus really had made the explanation, particularly if we may suppose that a vision sealed it to him.

Now this hypothesis is not an arbitrary attempt to overthrow Paul's testimony, but it is an effort to get rid of two real difficulties. Of course there are difficulties also that can be raised against the hypothesis itself ; to these however answers can be given. To

say that Paul never could have worked himself into such a conviction is a very large assumption, when we consider how foreign modern caution was to the times in which he lived. It is a fault of conservative criticism, that it argues too much upon what men are likely to do when actuated by pure and enlightened reason, and refuses to take into account the plain fact that men's minds often do not work along these lines, but are subject to vagaries of every sort. When dogmatic conclusions are held as truth unassailable, then facts of history, as might be shown even by modern examples, must accommodate themselves to dogmas, or it goes hard with them; and moreover such a growth of dogma into history the whole phenomenon of the Gospels compels us constantly to assume. It also may be objected that the report must inevitably have been corrected by the older Apostles. But this loses sight of the fact that Paul seldom came in contact with the Apostles, who confined themselves pretty closely to their own field of work, and that when he did meet them it was to settle some all-absorbing question. Another objection may lie in the supposed impossibility that a rite which did not actually have Jesus' sanction back of it should yet have become universally adopted by the Church. But Paul's authority was certainly sufficient for Gentile Christianity, which was the dominant influence in the catholic Church, and of the early history of the rite in the primitive Apostolic church we have practically no definite knowledge. Moreover it may be argued that the institution, when first it meets us, is by no means what we should expect a memorial rite to be. The very name by which the meeting went at which it is supposed that it was celebrated, and which from Paul's account would

seem to be identical with it, the *agape*, points to a different origin. It seems to have been a common social gathering of the Church, and this characteristic hardly could have assumed the prominence it did, so as to supply the name of the gathering, if the rite had been definitely instituted by Jesus himself for another purpose. And then again a memorial rite naturally would be celebrated once a year, on the anniversary of the event it commemorated, or at any rate it would be celebrated at certain definite times.

Before dropping the matter however it may be allowable to hazard one more conjecture. The fact that it was the love-feast which grew into the Lord's Supper suggests that perhaps after all some special character had already been attached to it which made the transition a natural and an easy one. Moreover, while the discovery of a dogmatic significance in Jesus' act, and the conclusion from this that Jesus must have seen it and indicated it, is no very violent assumption when the premises that governed Paul's reasoning are taken into account, yet there is no such obvious dogmatic basis for the command, "Do this in remembrance of me"; and if we could regard this command as really issuing from Jesus, the arbitrariness of Paul's addition would be very much lessened. What therefore do these words refer to in Paul's account? What was it that Jesus commanded to be done? They cannot mean, Repéat this formula, as modern churches do, for of this there is not the least hint in the narrative. Neither can they very well mean, Celebrate this rite. To the disciples the supper simply was the Passover meal, and if Jesus had wished to command them to celebrate, after his death, which they did not know

was so imminent, another supper, with an entirely different motive and in an entirely different way, he would have needed to go much more into detail than he does. Besides this, such a command would have been given only once, referring to the rite as a whole, whereas, by repeating it in connection both with the bread and the wine, Jesus indicates that he means something, not including both, but connected with each. And when, the second time, he gives the command before the cup is passed, he hardly can be guilty of the tautology, Drink this wine, as often as ye drink it, or, Celebrate this rite, as often as by drinking the wine ye celebrate it ; the added clause, "*as often as ye drink,*" makes it improbable that the words should be meant as the institution of a rite.

The only other suggestion which occurs to us as natural is the very simple suggestion that Jesus just means this : Do what I have just now done ; and the only thing he is recorded to have done is to have given thanks. And this at once would explain the fact that the words are repeated both before the bread and wine, and most of all it would explain Jesus' words in the latter case : "Do this," says Jesus, "*as often as ye drink.*" And does it not strike one too as eminently natural, and as just what we might expect of Jesus ? He wishes some simple token to bring him to their minds, and what more appropriate than this, whereby each day, and constantly throughout the day, the grateful recognition of God's mercies should be the spell to call up the thought of him who taught them to say "Our Father." Easily the recollection of this simple memorial might become especially attached to those meals where all the band of Christians met in



common, just as here Jesus had been seated with his disciples; and then Paul's discovery of the sacramental nature of the act would form the transition point through which the love-feast came gradually to be the solemn rite of the Lord's Supper.

We shall not attempt to criticise in detail the rest of the Gospel narrative. The story undoubtedly has got its coloring in a very decided degree from the Old Testament, and in some places, as in the account of the crucifixion, is taken almost bodily from that source. What appears with certainty is that Jesus was arrested privately and condemned by the Sanhedrin, and that sufficient influence was brought to bear upon the procurator to secure his execution, most likely on the charge of treason to the Roman power. Probably a few other facts may also be established with greater or less confidence, but they are not certain enough to build very much upon. Already we have before us the most that we can hope to know about the external aspect of Jesus' life. How that life in its apparent defeat and extinction yet went on to change so mightily the course of all human history, belongs to the story of the Church. To-day its power is at work more mightily than ever before, and in a new and truer way. His own disciples never fully understood Jesus, and in the Church his features grew so indistinct and unearthly that only the greatness of his personality, which once perceived, never could be quite forgotten, caused that they should not be altogether lost to sight. To-day it is our task to dispel the misty clouds of incense about his head, which hide while they fain would do him honor, and let the world look full upon his face. The hope for the Church is that she has set herself to do

this task, and already the effects are beginning to appear. Every effort to do this, partial though it may be, deserves the fullest welcome; every attempt to hinder it must inevitably fail. If one has confidence in truth, he cannot fear the issue.





## CHAPTER IX.

### THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS.

AND so with the death on the cross Jesus' life-work closed, and for the moment, with all its magnificent promise and heroic struggle, defeat seemed all that had come of it at last. How after that short interval of darkness light began again to break, how the idea of Jesus gradually and in the midst of stupidities and conventionalities and misunderstandings without number finally began to show what power and intense life was wrapped up in it, belongs, as we have said, rather to the history of the Christian Church. But there is one factor in this great result, the belief in Jesus' Resurrection, which is bound up so closely with Jesus' life that some slight discussion of it can hardly be avoided even if it leads just a little out of the way. Besides it is a difficult question, as we admit, and we do not want to have it appear that we would wish to shirk it. When, however, we say that the question is not an easy one, we do not mean to have it understood that a particularly strong case can be made out for the story of Jesus' bodily Resurrection as the Gospels understand it. This indeed is far from being true; the evidence for the Resurrection as the Gospels speak of it is very weak, weaker upon the whole than the

evidence for most of the other miracles in the Gospels. It is not necessary to dwell again upon the inconsistencies of the Gospel stories, but one surely cannot help seeing that many inconsistencies there are. According to one account the Resurrection took place at the end of the Sabbath, according to others on the first day of the week. Jesus appears first, now to Mary Magdalene alone, now to a number of women, now to Peter. In one Gospel the Apostles do not leave Jerusalem, in another the only appearance is in Galilee. The farewell words of Jesus do not agree. The ascension is now from the Mount of Olives, now from a mountain in Galilee. The appearances which are found in one Gospel are not found in another, and Paul, who professes to give an accurate list of them, excludes one half of the appearances which the Gospels give. Now we do not insist so much upon the fact that there are inconsistencies, as upon the fact that these inconsistencies should occur just here. There is no other part of the Gospels where the narratives are so impossible to reconcile, and yet this is just the place where we should suppose they would have been most exact. It was upon the Resurrection that the Apostles based their preaching, they constantly were making their appeal to it; well, then, we ask, why was there not here a definite statement of fact upon which tradition could draw? why do the Evangelists here seem to be left entirely to their own resources, and their narratives to assume more distinctly the appearance of legend? why do the Apostles appeal simply to the fact of the Resurrection and not to its special features? how does it happen that it is only in the latest strata of our Gospels, in our present Matthew and Luke, that we find the definite

features at all, and that even Mark had to stop with the appearance of the angels at the tomb? It may be that there are other good reasons for this, but we think by far the best reason is, that nothing more was told about the Resurrection because, in a word, there was nothing to tell, because the appearances were appearances only, with no external features to them, and because it was only when tradition had been given time to work that anything more could be told.

And then, while we are finding difficulties, one must we think admit that the Resurrection is peculiarly hard to accept, not perhaps because it is a miracle so much as because it is unimaginable: that a thing is unimaginable is surely, miracle or no miracle, no mean argument against it. What, we have to ask, was the nature of the body in which Jesus rose? was it still a material body? this certainly is what we should gather from the accounts. It is the same body which only a day before was buried, and a miracle by which matter has been changed of a sudden into spirit is at all events a little startling. And the Evangelists scarcely leave us in any doubt about this: Jesus speaks with a human voice, he is seen with the eye, he eats material food, he can be touched and handled, the wounds still are in his hands and side, "a spirit," he says, "has not flesh and bones as ye see me have." We do not intend to argue against the Resurrection in this sense, the raising up of the material body; those who can hold to this belief we have no desire to disturb. But those who only can look upon the Resurrection as something, not material, but spiritual, we ask how they are to reconcile with this the Resurrection of Jesus which the Gospels speak of. And we do not lose sight of the fact that there are other features

which point in a different direction, which seem to imply a body which was not material after all. Jesus passes through closed doors, he vanishes in an instant, he appears in different forms, he ascends into the clouds : these things, say the commentators, all show a spiritual body. If these qualities went by themselves we should have but little to say ; but the fact that they are qualities which are superadded to a material body, this is what makes the whole thing most inconceivable. How are we to think of a body which can be touched and still can pass through wood ? a body that can digest food and yet vanish in a moment ? How can we help seeing that here we are in the realm of magic, of fairy-land, where contradictions are overlooked, and where everything is possible ? It is just because the doctrine of the Apostles is something very different from this that it is not to be rejected without hesitation.

And that the doctrine of the Apostles was not at all like this is proven by the testimony of Paul, the only testimony that we have which is beyond suspicion, so that upon it our whole conception of the Resurrection must depend. In his letter to the Corinthians, he has occasion to recall to them the evidence upon which their faith is based, and he does this very carefully and circumstantially. "For I delivered unto you first of all that which also I received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures ; and that he was buried ; and that he hath been raised on the third day according to the Scriptures ; and that he appeared to Cephas ; then to the Twelve ; then he appeared to above five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain until now, but some are fallen asleep ; then he appeared to James ; then to all the Apostles ; and last of all, as unto one born out of due



time, he appeared to me also." We notice here that Paul speaks only of an appearance ; he does not speak of long interviews, he does not tell how Jesus walked and talked with his disciples and what commands he gave them ; he gives no hint of all this. And when we remember that Paul is giving here the strongest evidence that he can of the Resurrection, we say again that the only natural reason why he did not give details is that there were no details to give, that the appearances were momentary visions, and nothing more. And Paul shows this clearly when he classes his own vision with those of the Apostles, and makes no difference between them. For in the case of Paul there can be no doubt that we have a vision of the glorified Christ, not at all any seeing with the bodily eyes ; and surely if the other Apostles had seen Jesus on earth as an ordinary man, who had walked and talked with them, Paul never could have put his experience along with theirs, for the two are quite distinct. So that without hesitation we say that the fact of the Resurrection was a series of visions, of momentary appearances of the risen Christ, which were not visible to the bodily eye ; and the only question is whether we can explain these appearances in a purely natural way.

We think that certainly there is much to be said in favor of a natural explanation. Jesus had exercised such an influence over the minds of his disciples, that even his death is not likely wholly to have shaken their faith in him, and gradually they would have tried to reconcile his death with their earlier conceptions. And this they actually did in some way or other succeed in doing ; they found Jesus' sufferings in the Scriptures, and with this discovery their confidence may well have returned in some measure. With

the thought of Jesus' death as a sacrifice they easily could conceive of him as throned in heaven, only waiting to come again in order to complete his mission. And when this point was reached, in a moment of excitement, one of the disciples may have had a vision of the glorified Jesus ; and then it would have spread to others, so that even a number of persons at the same time, in highly wrought expectation, might think that they had seen it. Now what gives this theory its force is the fact that it does correspond to conditions which are to be found in the early Christian times. Such phenomena as these, visions and ecstasies, we know were frequent, and it was believed that they were divinely produced. One of the very witnesses to the Resurrection, the Apostle Paul, had this power, the power of seeing visions, which, in other cases at least, we must refer to natural causes. We cannot think of the Apostles as cautious and skeptical, ready to weigh and to scrutinize the supernatural, as it was just in these qualities that they were most signally lacking. If we can trust the account in Acts, the beginning of the Church was especially marked by these ecstatic outbreaks, and we need only recall the gift of tongues, a gift that was looked at by every one, even by Paul, as divinely produced. That all these phenomena were really miraculous we scarcely can believe, because we find what is analogous to them in all times of great religious excitement ; so that we must hesitate before we explain the appearances of Jesus in any different way.

Nor do we think that the point which has been so vigorously pressed, the disappearance of Jesus' body, is any objection to this theory ; it only becomes difficult when we refuse to see that there are legendary elements in the Gospels. We learn from the Gospels

that after the Sabbath the women found the tomb empty, while a vision of angels made known to them that Jesus had risen. But the whole of this story is decidedly suspicious ; to begin with, there is the vision of angels, and this at least cannot be history. And if we drop this vision then the whole motive for the story is gone ; to say nothing of the fact that the purpose which brings the women to the tomb, the anointing of a body which already has been buried, is utterly opposed to Jewish custom. And along with this is the fact that the disciples, in all likelihood, had fled at once to Galilee to escape the fate of their Master. It only is in the latest accounts that Jesus appears in Jerusalem, and we can see how this would be the tendency of tradition, to centre everything about the capital. But in the older accounts it is in Galilee that Jesus shows himself ; the appearance to five hundred disciples which Paul speaks of could have taken place in Galilee and in Galilee only ; the angels expressly send word through the women that he will meet the disciples in Galilee, and this loses all of its significance if there was a prior meeting in the city. We have no indication either as to how long it was before the visions took place, for the forty days which Luke speaks of clearly has no historical value ; and when the visions did take place, questions about Jesus' body must have been of infinitely little importance. It never could have occurred to the disciples that the Resurrection needed any such proof as this. Doubtless they assumed that the grave was empty, but even if we could conceive that they should think it necessary to make an examination, yet they were in Galilee, and already so long a time may have passed since the burial that examination would be useless.

At the same time we will not deny that after all has been said the difficulties in the way of this theory are still sufficiently great, and we do not feel that it is to be accepted unhesitatingly. In the first place a condition of mind which could produce a vision is not likely to have arisen at once after Jesus' death. True, the despondency of the disciples has we think often been much exaggerated. If Jesus had prepared the disciples for his death, as it seems probable that he had done, and if in words which they still remembered he had assumed that they were to carry on his work, then they could not have been utterly cast down when the crisis came ; and the fact that as many as five hundred of them still recognized themselves as Jesus' disciples, and could on occasion be gathered together, is proof that this was not so. But still the shock must have been a severe one, and they could not all at once have recovered from it ; they had now to go to work under conditions which certainly tended to sober their imaginations, and we do not see that there was much in their situation to call forth these extravagances. Now we do not know how long it was before the visions appeared, and yet we hardly can allow a very great interval of time. The Apostles placed the Resurrection on the third day, and this is not difficult to account for ; as Paul says, it was "according to the Scriptures." But while this does not fix the time of Christ's appearing, yet it is natural to think that this bore some reasonable relation to the time which the Apostles fixed upon for the Resurrection, and it agrees with this that Paul separates his own vision sharply from those of the other Apostles, and implies that there was a long interval of time between them.

Moreover we do not think it is altogether in favor of

the vision theory that it is in general only to the Apostles that the visions come ; on the whole we think that naturally these would have been the last to be affected by the delusion, and that it would have been more likely to appear among the less distinguished followers of Jesus. The Apostles were men who especially had been picked out by Jesus, and for some time they had been living under his direct influence, an influence that was eminently sane and heathful ; moreover the work which they afterwards accomplished shows that Jesus had not been altogether mistaken in them. But to think that just these men, not one or two of them alone, but all of them together, should twice have been deceived by a heated imagination into the belief that Jesus had appeared to them, is not without its difficulty. And we also should take into account the certainty which they felt that this appearance was real, and the immense consequences which resulted from the conviction. And most of all is it difficult to explain the limited number of the appearances ; the course of events seems to have been just what in the case of a religious excitement we should not have expected it to be, and the whole thing suddenly stops when it has reached its greatest intensity. How such a delusion might spring up it is easy to explain ; but when it once had got under way its whole tendency would be to spread, to assume wider and wider proportions. Here we have all the conditions, we have five hundred people so wrought upon that they fancy they have seen a vision ; and yet so far as Paul seems able to tell, this appearance, outside the Apostolic circle, is the first and the last one.

If one thinks that these arguments are not to be set aside, there still is left open to him the possibility of a

real influence of Jesus upon his disciples, a revelation of his continued existence, though a revelation purely psychical. We cannot at present deny the possibility of such an influence ; the evidence which in other cases points to its possibility is certainly extremely dubious, and yet even there it is not absolutely without force. So long as any other explanation is sufficient we cannot resort to this ; for our part however we are not ready to insist that other explanations are entirely sufficient. Of one thing only we can be sure, that the faith which the disciples needed for their task came to them ; and if we find God at all in history, least of all we shall refuse to find him here. Only it is not upon this that we can rest our own faith, if we would rest it securely ; it is after all only an objective fact, a fact of history, and such a fact always will be open to the possibility of doubt. Jesus for men to-day has brought life and immortality to light, but it is because he has revealed to us the real meaning of life, and has shown us that in its very nature it is divine and eternal.









## APPENDIX.

### AN ATTEMPT TO RECONSTRUCT THE COMMON SOURCE USED BY THE WRITERS OF THE THREE GOSPELS.

#### 1. Matt. 3: 1-12 (omitting v. 4).

1. The account of John is shown to have been in the source by the evident relation between Matt. and Luke. Just how it originally opened it is difficult to say. Mk.'s opening sentence appears from the word *εὐαγγέλιον* to be due to himself. The word *εὐαγγέλιον* is used by Mk. only in a technical and theological sense (Mk. 1:15, in connection with belief; 8:35; 10:29; 13:10; 14:9), and is so used nowhere else in the Synoptics, except where it is taken from Mk. (Matt. 26:13). In the source it probably was used once in the sense of "glad tidings" (Matt. 4:23, cf. 9:35). *Τῆς Ἰουδαίας* may be an

*Note.* In the following pages I have presupposed the work of Professor Weiss, to whom I hardly need to acknowledge my indebtedness. I am convinced that he has discovered the truth about the Gospel relations so far as his general theory goes. Barring points of detail, I differ from him only in the belief that Mark made a far greater use of the source than he would allow. When this is granted I think that a great many things will be explained, which cannot be explained otherwise; in fact I believe that there is no phenomenon in the Gospel which will not find a natural explanation. Especially I call attention to the way in which the sayings of Jesus are disposed of in the following pages, a good test of the theory. I have made no attempt to restore the order of the source except in isolated cases, and do not think that such a restoration is possible.

2. Mk. 1:9-11.
3. Matt. 4:1-11.
4. Matt. 4:23-5:2.

addition by Matt. The phrase *μετανοείτε, ἡγγικεν γὰρ ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν*, is better attributed to John, than, as in Mk. (1:15) to Jesus; for John's was more particularly a preaching of repentance and of preparation. The picturesque description of John (v. 4) is probably due to Mk. Matt. brings it in here because Mk.'s order is no longer natural when the verses which Mk. omits are retained (Matt. 3:5 ff.). *Ἡ περίχωρος τοῦ Ἰορδάνου*, omitted by Mk. is shown to have been in the source by its presence in Luke (3:3). The reference to the Pharisees and Sadducees is apparently due to the first Evangelist. Mk. adds the prophecy from Malachi. He changes the direct address to *βάπτισμα μετανοίας εἰς ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν*, in which he is followed by Luke. He omits most of John's words, changes the order of the clauses which he does give, probably changes *τὰ ὑποδήματα βαστάσαι* to *κύβας λύσαι τὸν ἱμάντα τῶν ὑποδημάτων αὐτοῦ*, and omits *καὶ πυρί*, the special motive for which disappears with the omission of Matt. 3:10.

2. As the question of John and the answer of Jesus are unknown to the other Evangelists, the incident is probably added by Matt. as an attempt to account for the fact of the baptism. The agreement of Matt. and Luke shows that *ἀνοίγω* was used in the source, instead of Mk.'s *ἄνοιγω*.

3. *Ἀγίαν πόλιν* for *Ἱεροσόλυμα* is probably due to Matt. Mk., followed by Luke, makes the temptation continue through the forty days, but loses the motive for this statement of time by his omission of the hunger and consequent temptation.

4. See p. 61. Matt. follows Mk. (4:17-22), and then goes back to follow the source. Perhaps this section opened, as in Mk., by a reference to John's imprisonment. Luke condenses the introduction to the source (4:14-15), and then opens his account of the ministry with a narrative of his own. He then takes up Mk., only omitting the call of the disciples, which he brings in in a different form at the close of Mk.'s account of the first

5. Luke 6:20b, 21; Matt. 5:11-12, 14-48 (omitting vv. 25, 26, 31, 32); 6:1-6, 16-18; 7:1-5, 12; Luke 6:43-45; Matt. 7:21, 24-29.

6. Matt. 8:1-4.

day. It seems better to retain Matt.'s phrase *ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν*, rather than Mk.'s *τοῦ θεοῦ*. See p. 218. Once however *τοῦ θεοῦ* occurs in the source (Matt. 12:28, cf. *ἐν πνεύματι θεοῦ*), and Mk. may have got his phrase here.

5. Luke's woes are probably due to his own point of view on the question of wealth, and it might be that, for the same reason, he has, in the beatitudes, changed what originally was spiritualized. I take the opposite view however. See p. 211. For the sermon as a whole see p. 211f. For Matt. 5:25, 26, see 33.

For Matt. 5:31-32, see 45. It is inappropriate here, as Jesus is laying down principles and not rules. Luke omits the early part of the sermon as having too special a reference to Jewish customs. He begins abruptly with the formula, *ἀλλὰ ὑμῖν λέγω τοῖς ἀκούουσιν* (cf. Matt.'s *ἠκούσατε*), and mixes up the sayings about retaliation and love to enemies. He then omits Matt. 6:1-6, 16-18, for the same reason as above. Matt. gathers together various passages on prayer. For 6:9-13, see 25; 6:14-15, see 42. Matt. 6:7-8 is probably due to oral tradition. Another long insertion occurs Matt. 6:19-34. For vv. 19-21, 25-33, see 30, (v. 34 is probably a current proverb added by Matt.); vv. 22-23, see 27: v. 24, see 41. Luke paraphrases the sayings about the mote and beam very freely, and inserts two sayings (6:39-40) for which see 19 and 29. For Matt. 7:7-11, see 25; 7:13-14, 21-23; 8:11-12, see 35. Matt. 7:19 is taken from the words of John (Matt. 3:10). Matt. 7:6 is probably due to oral tradition. Perhaps 7:15b is a popular proverb. *ὁ ἀγαθὸς ἄνθρωπος . . . τὸ στόμα αὐτοῦ* is inverted by Matt., and put in another connection (12:35).

6. The presence of this narrative in the source is indicated by the fact that Matt. brings it in immediately after the Sermon (probably its original position), instead of following Mark; and also by slight points of contact between Matt. and Luke. See *ἰδοὺ*, *Κύριε*, and the omission of Mk.'s picturesque touches *σπλαγχνισθεῖς* and *ἐμβριμηδόμενος αὐτῶν*.

7. Matt. 8:5-13 (omitting vv. 11, 12).
8. Matt. 9:18-26.
9. Matt. 11:2-19 (omitting vv. 14, 15).
10. Matt. 11:20-24.
11. Matt. 11:25-30.
12. Luke 10:23-24.

7. Luke also places this after the Sermon, but alters it very materially. Matt. now takes up Mark again for a few verses (8:14-16), losing of course the connection of this passage with Mk. 1:16-28.

8. As Luke follows the account of the centurion's son with the raising of the widow's son at Nain, this may have been the original position of the raising of the dead which was in the source. Luke has one point of contact with Matt. in the use of *κράσπεδον*. The narrative Matt. 9:27-31, is probably a combination by Matthew of the stories of blind Bartimæus, and of the blind man in the eighth chapter of Mark. The use of the epithet *ὁ ἐκ Δαυεὶδ*, here without any connection with the rest of the narrative, is in Mark met by a protest from the people, and seems to be connected with Mark's view of Jesus' Messiahship. In Matthew the *προσῆλθον αὐτῷ οἱ τυφλοὶ* (cf. Mk.'s *ἦλθεν πρὸς τὸν Ἰησοῦν*) comes in abruptly and without explanation. Jesus is made to disregard the entreaties of 'he man and to let them follow without notice, till he comes to the house. Why should he do this if he meant to heal them? The touching of the eyes, on the other hand, and the command to tell no one, without however the preliminary precautions which would make this prohibition of any use, come from the story in the eighth chapter. This would explain the presence of two blind men in the story, a number which Matthew retains when he comes to the story of Bartimæus. Matthew makes this combination simply to get a story for his list of miracles. Cf. his mutilation of another narrative in the following section (9:32-34).

9. As Luke brings in here the discourse about John, we may perhaps assume that this was the original position. Matt. introduces vv. 14, 15 from Mk. 9:13.

12. I put this here on the authority of Luke. Matthew has

13. Matt. 13: 3-9; Mk. 4: 26-29; Matt. 13: 31-33, 44-46  
51-52.  
14. Matt. 8: 19-22.  
15. Matt. 8: 23-27.  
16. Matt. 8: 28-34.  
17. Matt. 9: 1-8.  
18. Matt. 14: 13-21.  
19. Matt. 15: 1-14.

interwoven it into the parable discourse (13: 16-17), but this can hardly be its place, for it makes the verb refer in the first sentence to spiritual, and in the second to physical vision.

13. See p. 203. This section, which seems in the source to have been a parable discourse, is somewhat difficult to restore with certainty. I have given the introductory remarks about the crowd to Mark, because this is a favorite touch of his, and because the question attached to the last parable, *συνήκατε ταῦτα πάντα*, appears to suggest that the parables were spoken to the disciples.

15. I put this incident in because of its somewhat simpler form in Matt., and because it is so closely connected with the next following one.

17. Luke agrees with Matt. in *κλίνη*, v. 18, and *φόβου*, v. 26.

18. The connection of this with the return of the Twelve, and the notice of the crowds which prevented them from taking rest, are probably due to Mk. Luke has a few points of contact with Matt. *Καὶ τοὺς χρεῖαν ἔχοντας θεραπείας ἰᾶτο*, v. 11; the disciples' answer, given as in Matt., with a paraphrase of Mk.'s addition thrown in afterwards, v. 13; *τὸ περισσεῦσαν κλασμάτων κόφινος δώδεκα*, v. 17. The story of the walking on the sea contains no clear indication, but in my opinion is due to Mark. If this was not present in the source, it would help to explain why Luke omits it.

19. This appears to have been in the source (1) from the saying about blind guides, which Luke also has retained in an impossible connection (6: 39), and (2) from the apparently more original character of Matt. Thus Mk. on account of an addition which he makes, repeats the reason of the Pharisees'



20. Matt. 15 : 21-22, 26-28.

21. Matt. 16 : 13-20.

22. Matt. 17 : 1-9.

23. Matt. 17 : 14-18.

24. Matt. 9 : 36-38 ; καὶ προσκαλεσάμενος τοῦ μαθητᾶς αὐτοῦ ἐπέστειλεν αὐτοὺς καὶ παρήγγειλεν αὐτοῖς λέγων ;  
Matt. 10 : 5b-16 ; Luke 10 : 16.

attack a second time (7 : 2, 5) ; the order of Jesus' answer, the ground of the denunciation preceding the denunciation itself, seems more natural in Matt. In changing this order Mk. has to insert a καὶ ἔλεγεν αὐτοῖς, and to repeat a sentence twice (7 : 8, 9). Mk. has secondary touches not present in Matt. Notice καλῶς in v. 9, apparently suggested by the much more natural καλῶς, v. 6 ; the awkwardness of the two relative clauses in v. 11 ; the statement οὐκέτι ἀφίτε αὐτὸν οὐδὲν ποιῆσαι. Mk. introduces explanatory notes for gentile readers, vv. 3, 11. I attribute to him the interpretation of the parable, principally because the other interpretation which he gives seems certainly to belong to him, and because the style of the interpretation, especially the list of sins, savors more of a Pauline disciple than of Jesus.

20. See p. 168. To Mk. is probably due the notice of Jesus' inability to remain unknown, the words ἄφες πρῶτον χορτασθῆναι τὰ τέκνα, and the more definite description of the result of Jesus' promise, v. 30.

21. The presence of τοῦ θεοῦ in Luke, makes probable Matt.'s reading in v. 16. On account of the parallelism I have retained τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου (cf. ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ) in v. 13. The following section is probably due entirely to Mk. Notice the different use of ἐπιτιμᾶν in v. 30, and vv. 32, 33 ; see p. 236.

22. The discourse about Elias is omitted by Luke, and is probably due to Mk.

23. See p. 177. Matt. has added a saying from the source. See 42.

24. See p. 224. Mk.'s report of this discourse is evidently an abstract of the longer version. Matt. follows him in 10 : 1. As between Matt. and Luke, Matt. as usual for the most part keeps closer to the original. The words μηδὲ δύο χιτῶνας μηδὲ ὑποδήματα μηδὲ ῥάβδον, are also probably an addition

25. Luke 11:1 (omitting first clause); Matt. 6:9-13; Luke 11:5-8; Matt. 7:7-11.

26. Matt. 12:22-32.

27. Matt. 12:38-39; Luke 11:30; Matt. 12:41-45 (omitting the last sentence); Matt. 6:22-23.

28. Matt. 23:13-28; 4:29-32, 34-39.

from Mk. They obscure the meaning, for the ἄξιός γάρ ὁ ἐργάτης τῆς τροφῆς αὐτοῦ can refer only to the taking of bread and money. Moreover the long string of objects makes the sentence clumsy. Mk. adds these picturesque details, and pictures the disciples as going out with only a staff of all the traveller's ordinary equipment, an idea not quite corresponding with the prohibition of scrip and money in the source, but still harmless enough. Matt., perhaps without looking at the passage very carefully, remembered that a staff had been mentioned, and included it also in the prohibition. Luke's version is at times hardly more than a paraphrase. The opening section he omits, probably by reason of its reference to the Samaritans and Gentiles, but portions of it he brings in later (v. 9). To obviate the clumsiness which results from this omission, he anticipates the simile of the sheep and wolves. V. 12 was probably taken originally from the woes against the Galilean cities, and accordingly Luke takes this occasion to bring in that discourse. Matt. as usual brings together a number of sayings from the source. Vv. 17-22, see 29 and Mk. 13:9-13; vv. 24-33, see 29; vv. 34-36, see 32; vv. 37-39, see 39. For v. 42, cf. Mk. 9:41. V. 41 may be due to tradition. For Luke 10:17-20, see p. 164.

26. Matt. adds τυφλόν. This probably was not in the original account, as Luke omits it, and Matt. himself says, "the *dumb man* both spake and saw," whereas we naturally should have expected "the blind and dumb man," or else "the blind man," as that was the worse affliction. The last two verses seem to be modified somewhat in phraseology by tradition. Matt., because of the reference to blasphemy, adds verses taken for the most part from the Sermon on the Mount (vv. 33-35).

27. See p. 199.

28. This discourse is difficult to restore. For introduction see p. 250. V. 4 I place after v. 28, on the authority of Luke. V.

29. Luke 12:1 (to *πρῶτον*) ; Matt. 10:26-33, 19-20, 24-25.
30. Luke 12:13-20 ; Matt. 6:25-33, 19-21.
31. Matt. 25:1-12 ; 24:42-51.
32. Luke 12:49-50 ; Matt. 10:34-36.
33. Luke 12:54-59.
34. Luke 13:1-9.

33 is due to Matt., as is shown by *γεννήματα ἐχιδνῶν*, borrowed from the words of John. If this arrangement be approximately correct, Luke's version may be tolerably accounted for. On account of his mistaken interpretation of its occasion, he puts the saying about the cup and platter first. Then the other sections follow in the same relative order as in the source, only with several omitted because of their reference to matters specifically Jewish. Finally, what originally was the opening paragraph, displaced by the saying about the cup and platter, is thrown in at the end. For *ἡ σοφία τοῦ θεοῦ* see p. 306. Luke is often manifestly secondary. See 11:41 ; 47-48, where the whole point is missed ; 49, *καὶ ἐξ αὐτῶν*, where a statement as to what happened to others, as in Matt., is obviously wanted ; 49, *ἀποστόλους. υἱοῦ Βαραχίου* is probably due to Matt.

29. The saying about heaven is introduced by Luke (notice *πρῶτον*) simply to use it up (as is also v. 10). By making the next sentence refer back to *ὑπόκρισιν*, an entirely wrong sense is given to it. Notice Luke's *εἴπατε*, transferred to the relative clause, and so obscuring the thought (*cf.* Matt.). With this saying removed, a fairly good meaning is obtained for the introductory remark. It is the sight of the crowds which reminds Jesus of the future, when the true knowledge of the kingdom will be given to the world, and not simply to a little company. For the remainder see p. 280*f.*

30. Luke 12:13-20 I assign to the source because it seems to be authentic, and because it would account for the *διὰ τοῦτο* (Matt. 6:25).

31. See p. 283*f.* In addition *cf.* the knocking of the master with the knocking of the belated virgins. Luke 12:47-48 is most likely due to the Evangelist, for *ὁ βρυγμὸς τῶν ὀδόντων* naturally brings the section to an end.

34. *Cf.* the use of the parable by Mk. in the story of the barren fig-tree.

35. Matt. 7:13-14; 22 a; Luke 13:26-27; Matt. 8:11-12.  
 36. Matt. 12:1-13 (omitting vv. 5-7, 12).  
 37. Luke 14:8-14.  
 38. Luke 14:16-24.  
 39. Luke 14:26 (omitting *ἔτι . . . ἑαυτοῦ*), 27; Mk. 8:35 (omitting *καὶ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου*); Luke 14:28-35.  
 40. Luke 15:1-2; Mk. 2:17; Matt. 18:12-13; Luke 15:8-10 (altered to correspond to preceding); Matt. 21:28-32.  
 41. Luke 16:1-13.  
 42. Luke 17:1-6; Mk. 11:24; Matt. 18:21-34; 6:14-15.

35. Luke's introduction is suspicious, and perhaps suggested by the *ὀλίγοι εἶσιν οἱ εὐρισκοντες αὐτήν*. Luke correctly makes the passage refer to Jewish contemporaries. Luke, in paraphrasing the passage freely, has introduced features from the parable of the virgins: *ἀποκλείσθ τὴν θύραν*; *κύριε, ἀνοιξον ἡμῖν*; *οἰκοδεσπότης*. His representation is shown to be secondary because (1) the figure of the *οἰκοδεσπότης* has nothing in the context to suggest or explain it, and is inconsistent with v. 26 ff. V. 26 especially, shows that Jesus is speaking of himself, as he does in Matt.'s account; (2) the first reply of the master, *οὐκ οἶδα ὑμᾶς πόθεν ἐστέ*, is simply an anticipation of the second, and so must be dropped out. This makes necessary a reconstruction of the whole.

36. See p. 238.

37. The saying *πᾶς ὁ ὑψῶν . . . ὑψωθήσεται*, which was certainly in the source, gets its best connection here.

38. See p. 204.

39. The verse *ὃς δ' ἂν θέλῃ . . . σώσει αὐτήν* probably belongs here, as Matt. and Mk. both give it in this context, and Luke's *ἔτι τε καὶ τὴν ψυχὴν ἑαυτοῦ* seems to be a reminiscence of it.

40. See p. 300. For displacement of the parable of the two sons by the parable of the prodigal son, cf. *τί δὲ ὑμῖν δοκεῖ*, Matt. 21:28 and 18:12. For the conclusion see Luke 7:29-30.

41. V. 13 probably belongs here. Luke's version may in parts be a free one.

42. Luke more probably has the original form of the saying about prevailing faith. When it became connected with the

43. Luke 17:20-27 (omitting v. 25); Matt. 24:40-41; Luke 17:37.  
 44. Mk. 2:18; Matt. 9:15-17.  
 45. Mk. 10:2-10; Luke 16:18; Matt. 19:10-12.  
 46. Mk. 10:13-16.  
 47. Mk. 10:17-27; Luke 18:28-30.  
 48. Matt. 20:1-16.  
 49. Mk. 10:35-37; Matt. 20:22-27; Luke 22:27-30.  
 50. Matt. 21:1; Mk. 11:2-3; 7-8; Matt. 21:9; Luke 19:39-40, 45-46; 21:37-38.  
 51. Matt. 21:23-27.  
 52. Matt. 21:33-44 (omitting 43).

story of the barren fig-tree, the sycamore was changed to a mountain. The verse Mk. 11:24 is probably corrupt in both Matt.'s and Mk.'s version. For the conclusion, the form of Matt. 6:14-15 seems most original.

43. See p. 292.

44. Luke shows a slight connection with Matt. in ἐκχυθήσεται (5:37).

45. The saying πᾶς ὁ ἀπολύων . . . μοιχεύει is present in Luke, and agrees with Matt. in the last clause (Matt. 5:32), and in having a participial instead of a relative construction. μὴ ἐπὶ πορνείᾳ seems to be due to Matt. In general Mk. has retained the original form.

47. Probably in the source. See τρήματος; omission of μὴ ἀποστερήσης and ἠγάπησεν αὐτόν; πολλαπλασίονα, and in general the concluding verses. For Matt. 19:28 see 49.

49. Matt. has ἡ υἱὲρ τῶν υἱῶν Ζεβεδαίου, perhaps to save the credit of the Apostles. But in Jesus' answer the plu. is retained, ὁ αἰτεῖσθε. Notice that the τί θέλεις does not come in naturally after Matt.'s αἰτοῦσά τι, an indication that his text is secondary.

50. Mk. 11:5-6 is omitted by Matt., and it strikes me as one of Mk.'s additions. Similarly Mk. 11:15 b, 16. The omission by Matt. of ἀγοράζοντας at any rate seems an improvement.

51. Luke has slight points of agreement with Matt. (διδάσκοντος, καγῶ).

52. Luke 20:15a agrees with Matt., and both add πᾶς ὁ πεσών . . . λιμνήσει αὐτόν (at least in WH. text).

53. Matt. 22: 15-22.
54. Matt. 22: 23-33.
55. Matt. 22: 35-40.
56. Mk. 12: 35-37.
57. Mk. 13.
58. Matt. 25: 14-29.
59. Matt. 25: 31-46.

The historical notice in Matt. 21: 45, 46, follows Mk., but is influenced by Matt. 21: 26.

53. Just what historical setting this series of narratives had, or whether they belong together at all, it is not easy to say. Matt. and Luke agree in having *πονηρίαν* (*πανουργίαν*) for Mk.'s *ὑπόκρισιν*. Moreover, the first *διδάσκεις* in Luke may be an echo of a version like Matt.'s. Mk. seems to be less original in v. 14 (last clause), v. 15*b*, 16*a*.

54. Matt. seems slightly more original than Mk. in 22: 25, 26; 29, *πλανᾷσθε ὅτι*; 30, *ἐν τῇ ἀναστάσει*; omission of *πολὺ πλανᾷσθε*, and perhaps elsewhere.

55. Matt. is shown to be original by the fact that Luke has made use of the narrative in the parable of the good Samaritan, and has retained *νομικός*, *πειράζων*, and *διδάσκαλε*.

56. The actual question and answer in Matt. may be due to the *πῶς λέγουσιν οἱ γραμματεῖς*.

57. Matt. adds *καὶ συντελείας τοῦ αἰῶνος*, v. 3; perhaps *μηδὲ σαββάτω*, v. 20. Matt. 24: 9-14, is a free paraphrase, due to the fact that this passage already has been used by Matt. (10: 17-22). In v. 22, Matt. has *κολοβωθήσονται αἱ ἡμέραι ἐκείναι*, and this may be a reminiscence of the original form. In this case Mk. must have changed the form of the whole sentence from a standpoint after the event, and in the first clause have been followed by Matt. It seems more likely, however, that Mk.'s form is original. *εὐθέως* (v. 29), however, seems to be a survival from the source. Luke is very free, and reveals a standpoint to which the fall of Jerusalem is past. He is much more definite in his predictions (vv. 20, 24), and he separates the catastrophe from the parousia, placing between them the *καιροὶ ἐθνῶν*, of indefinite extent.

58. Matt. 25: 30, is very likely an addition, modelled after similar endings.



60. Luke 22: 1, 2 (introduce ἐν δόλῳ κρατήσαντες); Mk. 14: 10, 11a; Matt. 26: 16-18a (to λέγει); Mk. 14: 14-15 (from ποῦ); Matt. 26: 19.

61. Matt. 26: 20, 26-30 (omitting εἰς ἄφεσιν ἀμαρτιῶν).

62. Matt. 26: 31-35 (omitting v. 32).

63. Matt. 26: 36, 39-41 a (omitting τῷ Πέτρῳ).

64. Matt. 26: 47-52, 56 b.

65. Matt. 26: 57-59; Mk. 14: 56, 60-62 (through εἰμί); Luke 22: 69; Mk. 14: 63-65 (insert τίς ἐστὶν ὁ παῖς αὐτοῦ); 66-72 (omit ἐκ δευτέρου, and substitute καὶ ἐξελθὼν ἔξω ἔκλυσεν πικρῶς).

60. Some section of this sort is necessary as a connecting link, and the simpler form in Matt. (without the suggestion of a miracle), seems original. See also εὐκαιρίαν in Matt. and Luke. The opening verse I take from Luke, because it seems a trifle more natural, and because it suits better the ἀπὸ τότε of Matt. (though of course this may itself be secondary). Matt. 26: 2, 18b, I take as a free reproduction of the sense. The original form seems to be in Mk.

61. The prophecy of the betrayal may possibly belong here. Notice, however, that Luke displaces it, and throws it in later, which he would have been less likely to do if he had had both Mk. and the source against him.

62. V. 32 has a poor connection, and seems to be due to Mk.

63. Luke's account is much the shorter, and it seems rather less likely that he should abbreviate it, than that Mk., as he often does, should enlarge upon it. Moreover, the leaving behind of the disciples in two sections, looks a little artificial, especially as all the disciples appear to be present when Judas arrives, although Jesus had not returned to the larger body of them. Notice also, that Matt. has the plu. ἰσχύσατε, though he follows Mk. in making the words addressed to Peter only.

64. This is only a guess. Matt. and Luke agree in putting two sayings in Jesus' mouth, but the sayings differ. The incident of the sword seems in Mk. to be a little too parenthetical, and to need something to complete it.

65. Mk. 14: 57-59, gives me the impression of being an insertion. It, moreover, is omitted by Luke. κατὰ τοῦ θεοῦ

66. Mk. 15:1-41.  
 67. Matt. 27:57-60.  
 68. Matt. 28:1 (omitting first clause); Mk. 16:4-5; Matt. 28:5-7.

*τοῦ ζῶντος*, in Matt., seems to be a reminiscence of Matt. 16:16.

66. In the lack of positive data, I do not venture to restore this section, but, in all likelihood, Mk. has amplified it more or less.

68. The incident of the preparation of the spices, I refer, with some hesitation, to Mk., *cf.* 60. The *καθὼς εἶπεν* is assigned both by Matt. and Luke to the resurrection, and not, as by Mk., to the meeting in Galilee. *cf.* 62.

Sections of the Gospel Narrative due to the writer of our First Gospel.

Matt. 1; 2; 3:14-15; 4:13-16; 5:5, 7-9; 6:7, 8, 34 b; 7:6; 8:17; 9:13 a; 10:41; 12:5-7, 17-21; 13:35-43, 47-50; 14:28-31; 15:23-25; 17:24-27; 18:10, 15-17, 19-20; 21:4, 5, 10, 11, 14-16; 23:2-3, 8-10, 33; 26:15, 25, 53 (?); 27:3-10, 19, 24-25, 51 b-53, 62-66; 28:2-4, 9-20.

Sections of the Gospel Narrative due to the writer of our Second Gospel.

Mk. 1:6, 16-39, 45; 2:2, 4, 13-15, 27; 3:3-4, 6, 9-21, 31-35; 4:1, 10-20, 33-34; 5:3-6, 8-9, 18-20, 30-32, 35-37, 43; 6:1-6, 13-33, 45-56; 7:3-4, 17-23, 31-37; 8:1-26, 31-33; 9:11-18, 20-26, 28-41; 10:1, 32-34, 46-52; 11:12-14, 20-22; 12:32-34, 38-44; 14:2-9, 13-14, 17-21, 33-34, 39-42, 48-49, 51-52.

Sections of the Gospel Narrative due to the writer of our Third Gospel.

Luke 1; 2; 3:1-2, 10-15, 23-28; 4:16-30; 5:1-9; 7:11-17, 36-50; 8:1-3; 9:61-62; 10:17-20, 25-42; 11:27-28; 13:10-17, 31-33; 15:11-32; 16:19-31; 17:7-19; 18:1-14; 19:1-10, 41-44; 22:31-38; 23:6-12, 27-31, 39-43; 24:13-53.

Cases in which Mark has borrowed phrases or incidents from the Common Source, and has used them apart from their original connection.

Mk. 1:15, *cf.* Matt. 3:2; 1:21, *cf.* 4:23; 1:22, *cf.* 7:28-29; 1:24, *cf.* 8:29; 1:28, *cf.* 4:24; 1:32, 34, *cf.* 4:24; 1:45, and similar passages, *cf.* Luke 12:1; 2:15-16, *cf.* Luke 15:1-2; 3:4, *cf.* Matt. 12:12; 3:7-8, *cf.* 4:25; 3:13, *cf.* 5:1; 3:14-15, *cf.* 10:7-8; 3:21, 22, *cf.* 12:22-24; 4:21, *cf.* 5:15; 4:22, *cf.* 10:26; 4:24, *cf.* 7:2; 4:25, *cf.* 25:29; 6:6 b, *cf.* 4:23; 6:7 b, 13, *cf.* 10:8; 6:12, *cf.* 10:7; 6:14-16, *cf.* 16:14; 6:34, *cf.* 9:36 (?); 6:56, *cf.* 9:21; 8:11-12, *cf.* 12:38; 8:33, *cf.* 4:10; 8:34, 35, *cf.* 10:38-39; 8:38, *cf.* 10:33; 9:1, *cf.* 24:34; 9:23, *cf.* Luke 17:6; 9:33-35, *cf.* Matt. 24:26; 9:37, *cf.* Luke 10:16 and Matt. 10:40; 9:40, *cf.* Matt. 12:30; 9:42, *cf.* Luke 17:2; 9:45-48, *cf.* Matt. 5:29-30; 9:50, *cf.* Luke 14:34-35; 10:31, *cf.* Matt. 20:16; 10:38 b, *cf.* Luke 12:50; 11:12 *ff.* *cf.* Luke 13:6 *ff.*; 11:22-23, *cf.* Luke 17:5-6; 11:24-25, *cf.* Matt. 18:19, 21 *ff.*; 12:38, *cf.* Matt. 23; 14:21, *cf.* Luke 17:2; 14:28, *cf.* Matt. 28:7.





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